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THE FIRST  
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CATHERINE  
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THE FIRST  
WOMAN

匪我思存——

1. 匪我思存，即「匪我思存」，「匪我思存」即「匪我思存」。  
2. 匪我思存，即「匪我思存」，「匪我思存」即「匪我思存」。  
3. 匪我思存，即「匪我思存」，「匪我思存」即「匪我思存」。  
4. 匪我思存，即「匪我思存」，「匪我思存」即「匪我思存」。

# Eastern Palace - Chapter 01-10

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# Chapter 1

[Eastern Palace](#) · [Novel Translations](#)

# Second Translation Project: Eastern Palace

## 《东宫》 – Chapter 1

[July 5, 2014](#)[November 13, 2015](#) [karma](#)

Hi everyone, karma here! I'll be collaborating with suteki on translating Eastern Palace from now on. She's been looking for someone to collaborate with for a while now, and unfortunately ended up with me. I probably caused both her and evida a ton of stress because of my late translations/edits, so I just wanted to say how much I appreciate their patience!!

For those of you who have faithfully followed suteki's blog, you've probably already seen chapter one of Eastern Palace; I've edited and added foot notes to chapter one as a start for the Eastern Palace translations. Enjoy!!

Sutekii: I'm so glad to be collaborating with karma on this project. As for those who have read my translation... can see/read her translation is a lot more accurate and flows better compare to mine *blushes, feeling ashamed* I hope you all enjoy her revised version.



The novel consists of 42 Chapters + Epilogue. Although there's 42 Chapters each chapter isn't too long. **xia0yuer** over her blog [Confession of a Drama Addict](#) has translated a few of her favorite scenes from the novel. Her translations are detailed and well translated compared to mine.

This fan made video basically summaries the novel. Plenty of spoilers so for readers that want to enjoy their reading experience without spoilers do not watch.



This novel is not your fluffy romance novel, there's plenty of angst and tears involve while reading the novel, it doesn't have your typical happily ever after ending, be prepared to have a tissue box next to you while reading.



## Brief Introduction

She is the much-loved and spoilt ninth princess of Xi Liang country. She embarked on the road to Central Plains (Zhongyuan) for an arranged marriage. He is the almighty and powerful crown prince. Because of a political marriage, he is forced to marry a foreign princess. He has his own beloved concubine, Zhao Liang Di. She has her own life, escaped from the palace to ride horse, disguised as a young man, chased thieves, sent lost children home and drinking wine. Initially, their lives are like two parallel lines, never intersect. However, the fight for power and position in eastern palace, endless gossips and hidden murderous intention, led her to get involved step-by-step.

After surviving a near death experience, she suddenly recalled what happened three years ago:

His blind date with her in the desert,

He beheaded the white-eyed wolf king in Tian Gen mountain for her sake,

They held a grand wedding on the prairie.

However, he also brought her disaster, a bloody genocide ...

River of Forgetfulness, to forget a love.

When her memory returned, how should she choose?

(Credits: this part is translated by **peanuts** (peanuts if you're reading this... so sorry peanuts that I wrote decembi before that) on [bookshushengbar](http://bookshushengbar.com).)



**Disclaimer: This chapter has been translated by sutekii and karma**

**Chapter 1**

As usual, I had another argument with Li Cheng Yin. Every time we quarrel, he always ignores me, and also does not allow others to speak with me.

When I felt exceedingly bored, I would sneak out to play. A'Du would follow me, she has always been at my side, no matter where I go, I just can't shake her off, just like a shadow. Fortunately, I do not hate this person A'Du, apart from being a little stubborn, she's good in everything else, she even knows martial arts, which is helpful in fighting off bad guys.

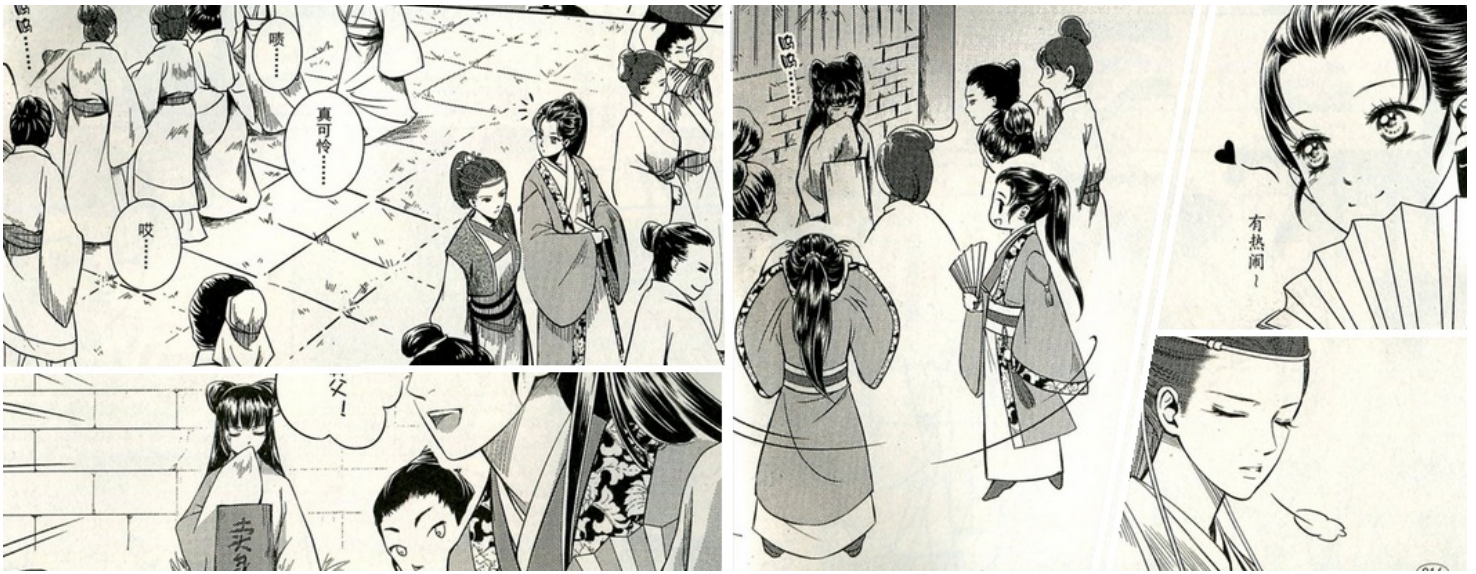
We went to the tea house to listen to stories, Mr. Storyteller is very enthusiastic, when he reached the part about how the Immortal Swordsman from thousands of miles away can save someone's life, I asked A'Du, "Hey, do you believe there are Sword Immortals in this world?"

A'Du shook her head.

I also feel that it can't be true.

In this world there are definitely martial arts experts, like A'Du handling the gold inlaid knife, I have seen her in action, as fast as lightning. But from thousands of miles away to save lives, I think that's purely an exaggeration.





When we walked out of the wine shop, we saw a circle of people on the street. I am someone who innately loves to get in on the action, naturally I squeezed past to see what happened. It turned out to be a girl dressed in white mourning clothes on her knees weeping and sobbing, behind her was a worn out mat, covering a stiff corpse, beneath the straw mat, there only revealed a pair of rigid feet, no shoes even worn. Everyone around sighed and shook their heads while pointing at the five words on her front “selling body to bury father”, written in black ink on a white cloth.

“Whoa. Selling body to bury father! Dare I ask, how much does this young miss intend to sell herself for?”

Everyone glared at me. I forgot I was still in men’s clothing, so I pulled back, and stuck out my tongue. At this point, A’Du tugged my sleeve, I understood her gesture, A’Du is always worried that I will get into trouble. Really, although I spend much of the day wandering about the streets, but besides stopping a frightened horse one time, fighting some young ruffians twice, sending lost children home three times, chasing thieves four if not occasionally five times, I really do not meddle over other people’s business.....I secretly snuck around to the back of the crowd, and carefully studied the carcass beneath the worn out woven mat, then I knelt down, conveniently pulled a strand from the straw mat, and lightly scratched those stiff soles.





just begun, and she'll pull me away running. But her hands are like iron pincers, no matter what I do, I cannot pull free, left with no other choice but to allow her to drag me along, stumbling all along the way. Just as we ran half way down the street and got mixed within the crowd, I suddenly saw in front of a tea shop, a man looking at me. This person had a handsome appearance, wearing moon-white robes and quietly staring at me with his jet-black eyes.

I don't know why, my heart suddenly jumped. Only after arriving underneath the memorial arch did A'Du finally let go of my hand, I turned my head to look at that man once more, but he was already gone.

A'Du didn't ask what I was looking at, this was one of her good points, she never asked questions. I felt a little restless today, perhaps it was because of the quarrel with Li Cheng Yin. Even though he can never beat me in an argument, and I can always render him speechless, but he will always use other ways to fight back, such as letting others ignore me, as if I am an invisible person that no one else can see. That sort of feeling is really hard to cope with, if I don't sneak out to play, sooner or later I will suffocate to death..

I felt extremely bored, I looked down and kicked a stone, the rock bounced around, just like in Cuju [3]. Li Cheng Yin is an expert at Cuju, the small rubber ball on the tips of his feet, as if it were a living thing, letting him do many tricks with it. I do not know how to play Cuju, nor have I ever learned it, because Li Cheng Yin refuses to teach me, and won't allow anyone else to teach me, he has always been very petty.

I used slightly more force, and kicked the stone into a gutter, only after the "plop" sound did I realize that unexpectedly, I had already unconsciously walked into an alley. On either side were the high walls of households, the houses here always build them very high, and the odd switch sitting on the fence, I suddenly felt a little creeped out..... the kind of feeling that makes one's hair ends stand vertically up.

I looked back, and surprisingly I didn't see A'Du, I shouted loudly, "A'Du!"

The alley, completely desolate and empty, resounded with the sound of my voice. An unprecedented feeling of panic came over me. For the past few years, A'Du and I have been inseparable, even when I went to the toilet, she would

dash to my side. When I woke up, she would accompany me, when I went to sleep, she would sleep at the front of my bed, she has never left me farther than ten feet away without a word, but now A'Du was suddenly gone.

I saw that man, that man in moon-white robes, he stood at the other end of the alley, watching me from a distance.

My mind was in a huge state of confusion, I turned around and shouted, "A'Du!"

This person, I do not recognize at all, but the way he looked at me on the street earlier was very strange. I feel the way he is looking at me right now, is also very strange.



I asked him, "Hey! Have you seen A'Du?"

He did not answer, but instead slowly walked towards me. The sun shone on our faces, he was very good-looking, even better looking than Li Cheng Yin. His eyebrows were like two swords, eyes black as gems, tall nose bridge, thin lips, but the shape was very nice, in short, he was a good-looking man. He kept walking until he was in front of me, suddenly he smiled, "Miss, may I ask which A'Du you are looking for?"

Was there more than one A'Du in this world? I said, "Of course my A'Du, have you seen her? She is wearing a yellow garment, just like a small yellow Oriole."

He said exasperatingly slowly, "Wearing a yellow garment, like a small yellow Oriole——I've seen such a person."

"Where is she?"

"Right in front of me." He was much too close, so close I could see the mysterious radiance shining from his eyes, "Unless it's not you?"



I looked down at my clothes, I was wearing a pale yellow male garment, the same as A'Du, this person was really strange.

He said, "Xiao Feng, we haven't met for several years, you're still like this, you haven't changed at all."

I couldn't help but be greatly shocked, Xiao Feng is my pet name, ever since coming to Shang Jing [4], no one's addressed me that way anymore. I blinked, and perplexedly looked at him, "Who are you?"

He smiled faintly, and said, "That's right, you don't know who I am."

"Did my daddy send you?" I blinked, staring at him. Before departing, my father had promised me that he would send someone to see me and give me a lot of delicious food.

He didn't answer me, he only asked, "Do you want to go home?"

Of course I want to go home, even in my dreams I want to go home.

I asked him, "Were you sent by Brother?"

He smiled at me, and asked, "You also have a brother?"

Of course I have a brother, in fact I have five, fifth brother especially loved me. When I went away, he cried a lot, using the whip, he thrashed all the soil on the floor everywhere. I know it was because he hated to part with me, could not bear me being so far away.

This person didn't even know that I have a brother, it seems that this person was not actually someone sent from home, I was slightly disappointed. I asked him, "How do you know my name?"

He said, "You once told me."

I told him? Did I actually know him?

Why do I have no impression of it.

I don't know why, but I don't think this man is a liar. Probably because there wouldn't be such a weird liar. In this world, swindlers will strive to make themselves appear like normal people, so that they would not be strange, because it is easy to reveal their weakness that way, and also be exposed by someone.

I tilted my head, sized him up and asked, "Who exactly are you?"

He said, "I am Gu Jian."

He didn't say anything else, as if these four words already represented everything.

I had never heard of this name, I said, "I'm going to look for A'Du."

He said to me, "I've been looking for three years and I've finally met you, are you so unwilling to speak with me for just a little longer?"

I felt very strange, "Why were you looking for me? Why have you been looking for me for three years? Three years ago, did I know you?"

He smiled lightly and said, "Three years ago I made you angry and you ran away, I could only keep looking until today. But you already no longer recognize me."

I felt like he was lying, forget three years ago, even matters from thirteen years ago I still remember very clearly. My memory is extremely good, when I was two or three years old, though I had only just started keeping record of things, I already remembered many things. For example, Mother once gave me a type of fruit pulp that was very sour, I really didn't like it; or Mother holding me, seeing father return on his horse, the first golden rays of the morning sun plating my father's body, as if he was wearing golden armor, awe-inspiring and majestic.

I was determined to stop speaking to him. I turned and left, where could A'Du have gone? As I was thinking, I turned around to look, that GuJian was still standing there watching me, his eyes staring moment after moment not blinking,

seeing me look back at him, he smiled at me again. He had smiled at me several times already, I suddenly felt that his smile was like a layer of broken ice fragments floating on the water’s surface, as if smiling at me was actually something immensely painful for him.

---

[1] Zha Shi 诈尸: The sudden movement of a corpse (a superstition).

[2] In Chinese, because of the placement of the word “bastard” (王八蛋) in the front of the sentence, it can mean both “a bastard is scolding who?” or “who are you calling bastard?” Therefore he took it as the latter and replied in the same grammar pattern with “I’m calling you bastard”, which can also mean “a bastard is scolding you”, which, as you can see, is exactly what she wanted.

[3] Cu Ju 蹴鞠: The earliest form of football.

[4] Shang Jing 上京: Modern-day Beijing.



*suteki*: so how was the first chapter for you? If you liked it, for those who can read Chinese you can find the novel [here](#) and the manga [here](#). Or if you prefer to listen to the novel instead you can find it [here](#). If you know how to read Vietnamese you can find the translation [here](#)

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[C-novel Chinese Novel Translation Dong Gong Eastern Palace 东宫](#)



# Chapter 2

[Eastern Palace](#) · [Novel Translations](#)

# Eastern Palace 《东宫》 – Chapter 2

[July 20, 2014](#)[November 13, 2015](#) karma

**Disclaimer: This chapter has been translated by sutekii & karma.**

## Chapter 2

Really such a weird man, and he even insisted that I knew him; I don't know such a strange person.

After walking out of the alley, I noticed A'Du sitting on the bridge. She just blankly stared at me. I asked her, "Where did you go? I was worried to death."

A'Du sat there motionless, even after shaking her, she did not move. At this point, that Gu Jian came over, he softly snapped his fingers at A'Du, I only heard a "chi" sound, and A'Du swiftly jumped up, pulled out her gold inlaid knife with one hand, and pulled me behind her with the other.



Gu Jian leisurely smiled, and said, "We fought three years ago, earlier I only needed to use one finger to seal your meridian points. Don't you understand, if I really wanted to do something, you alone cannot stop me?"

A'Du did not speak, she just looked at him fiercely, her posture was like a mother hen protecting her chicks. Once when Li Cheng Yin really angered me to the point that I collapsed, A'Du also glared at him like this.

I didn't expect this Gu Jian would be able to seal A'Du's meridian points, A'Du's skills are extremely good, normally, people can't even get close to her, much less easily restrain her, this Gu Jian's skill in martial arts is simply unbelievable. I stared at him dumbfounded.

But he just heaved a long sigh, looking at A'Du who had her sword drawn. And

the me poking my head out behind A'Du..... then he glanced at me again, and finally turned and left.

I watched him walk away, the alley completely empty, and that strange Gu Jian finally walked out of sight. I asked A'Du, "There's nothing serious right? Are you hurt?"

A'Du shook her head and made a gesture.

I knew the meaning of this gesture, she was asking me if I was very sad.

Why should I be upset?

I found her baffling, so I just exaggeratedly rolled my eyes at her.

It was getting dark, I took A'Du to Wen Yue Lou (问月楼) to eat dinner.

Whenever we would come out and stroll the streets, we would always come to Wen Yue Lou to eat, because here the roast mandarin duck is delicious.

We sat down and were eating the roast meat, when the Uncle He that sells the drinks and his daughter Fu Jie Er came up the stairs. Uncle He is blind, but he is very good at playing the Huqin [1], every time we come Wen Yue Lou to eat, I always have to trouble Fu Jie Er to sing a tune.

Fu Jie Er has already long been familiar with us, she greeted us and said to me, "Liang Gong Zi [2]"

I politely asked her to sing two songs, and she began singing《Mulberry Harvest.》

Eating roasted mandarin duck, with a warm pot of lotus liquor, and listening to Fu Jie Er sing, is really the most beautiful thing in life.

The meat was still sizzling on the broiler, A'Du used her chopsticks to turn over the meat, and then dipped the ready meat with sauce, before placing it onto my plate. I ate the grilled meat, and drank a cup of lotus liquor, at this point, a group of people arrived upstairs, they made thudding sounds as they walked, loudly chatting and laughing, causing people to cast glances their way.



I started speaking nonsense with A'Du, "You see those people, one look and you can tell they're not good people."

A'Du stared at me puzzled.

I said, "Although these people are dressed in ordinary clothes, but every one of them are wearing kuai xue [3], a knife at their waist, and almost all of them are wearing protective wrist guards, they also have Deer skin fastened around their thumbs. These people are both used to wearing kuai xue, and familiar with the horse and bow, and yet they still strut pretentiously around town with a knife..... and with those rakish looks and frivolous behavior, these guys must be Yu Lin Langs [4]."

A'Du also didn't like Yu Lin Langs, so she nodded.

The minute the Yu Lin Langs sat down, one of them called out, "Hey, the one singing songs! Come and sing 《Climbing Uphill Missing a Youth!》"

Uncle He was trembling and apologized to them, he said, "This young lord here has asked for two songs, we have only just finished singing one. Once we're done singing this one, then we will come and serve you gentlemen."

That Yun Lin Lang used force and smacked the table, "Insolence! The song finished or not! Quickly come and sing for us, or I'll hack you in half you old blind man."

Another one looked at me, smiled and said, "As for being handsome, he really is handsome, looks even better than that lady singer. Hey! Rabbit lad [5], come over and accompany us for a drink."



I sighed, originally I didn't want to fight with anyone, looks like it was unavoidable now. I put my chopsticks down, and drawled, "Such a nice shop, how come there suddenly arrived a bunch of things that don't speak human language? How disappointing!"

Hearing that infuriated them, each of them pounding the table in succession, "Who are you insulting?"

I flashed a smile at them, "Oh, pardon me, looks like you aren't things."

The person who had retorted first couldn't hold back, he drew his sword and rushed towards us. A'Du lightly slapped the table, the plates and bowls didn't move an inch, only the chopsticks container jumped up due to the vibration. She conveniently pulled out a pair of chopsticks, without waiting for the chopsticks tube to fall back onto the table, that man's obvious swaying sword tip was already thrust in front of me. In a split second, A'Du had pierced the chopsticks down, there was only a blood-curdling screech, followed by the "clang" of a long sword dropping to the ground, and that man's palm had been pinned to the table by those chopsticks, immediately bleeding profusely. The man screamed while reaching to pull the chopsticks out, but the chopsticks went through his entire palm pinning it to the table, just like a spike, how could he move it in the slightest.



His companions had originally all drawn their swords, wanting to rush forward; A'Du with her hands resting on the chopsticks barrel, she coldly swept them a look. The group of men was intimidated by A'Du's imposing manner, and did not

dare to step forward.

The man who had been nailed to the table was still crying out like a dying pig, I found his shouting much too annoying, so I smoothly picked up a piece of osmanthus cake and stuffed it into his mouth, he choked until his eyes rolled, and finally was unable to utter another sound.

I took the chopsticks that I had just used to pick up the osmanthus cake, and lightly patted my palm, I looked around at everyone, and asked, “Now which of you would still like to drink with me?”

The group was so frightened that they didn’t even dare to breathe heavily. I stood up, took a step forward, they took a step back; I took another step forward, and they took another step back; they retreated until they reached the edge of the staircase, one of them loudly shouted, “Flee!” Frightening them all to swarm forward and flee down the stairs.

No fun at all..... I didn’t even get the chance to tell them, that I definitely wouldn’t be like A’Du and pierce them with chopsticks, I just wanted to scare them a little.

I sat back down at the table to eat the roasted meat, the person with his palm nailed on the table was still bleeding, the reek of blood was really unpleasant, I slightly pursed my brows. A’Du understood my meaning, she pulled the chopsticks out, then gave that man a kick. The man clasped his injured palm, and frantically scrambled towards the stairs to escape, even forgetting to take his sword. A’Du used the tip of her foot to hoist it up, grabbed the sword with her hands, then handed it to me. At our place, we had a custom, whoever loses the fight must leave their swords behind, A’Du has accompanied me to the city for three years, and still has not forgotten our old home town traditions.

I looked at the copper chisel engraved on the handle, and could not help but furrow my brows.

This time A’Du did not understand what my frown meant, I handed the sword back to A’Du, and said, “Give it back to him.” At this time, the man had already crawled to the edge of the stairs, A’Du with a toss of her hand, nailed the sword beside him with a “clang” into the side pillars. That man let out a loud cry, without even daring to turn his head around, and just like a silk ball, he rolled

straight down the stairs.

As we came out of Wen Yue Lou, the ground was covered with moonlight, right above the treetops was a crescent moon, with plump white light penetrating through, as if someone had taken a bite of a glutinous rice cake. I had eaten too much, even my stomach was bloated to the point of aching, concernedly holding my stomach, I lazily stepped one at a time following behind A'Du. With my snail-like crawling method, it was very likely that it would already be daylight by the time I crawled back.

But A'Du had been very patient, always stepping forward one step, then halting, waiting for me to catch up. We had just reached the street corner when suddenly from the darkness rushed forth a bunch of people, the several men in front were all holding gleaming swords, and someone shouted, "It was those two!"

Taking a closer look, it turned out to be that group of Yu Lin Langs, this time coming with many reinforcements.

Why is it that every time out we come out to play, we always end up fighting? I simply don't think I am someone who likes to cause trouble ah!

Looking at the dense mass of heads, inevitably there would be all kinds of appearances, I sighed.

A'Du pressed against the gold inlaid knife at her waist, and looked inquiringly at me.

I didn't tell A'Du, that the words engraved on that sword handle already made me lose my mood for fighting. Since we're not fighting, then we'd better make ourselves scarce —and run!

A'Du and I ran wildly all the way; in fighting, both of us would never dare to declare ourselves the world's number one, but as for escaping, if we were to yield second in the capital, then I reckon no one would dare name themselves first.

In these past three years we escaped on the streets every day, the experiences of being chased and ousted were indeed too plentiful, once we were in a full run, we would focus on picking obscure alleys, leading them in all directions, after

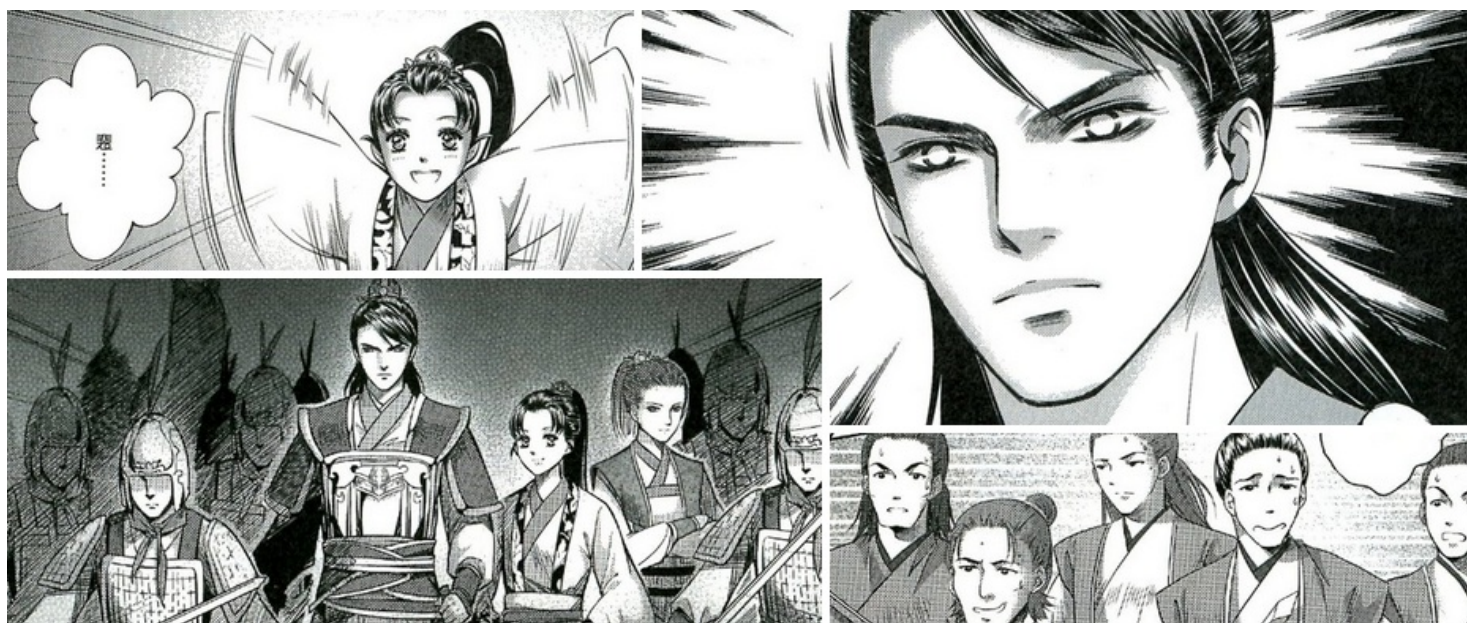


only a little bit we should be able to throw them off our tails.

But this time, the group of Yu Lin Lang that we encountered were also seriously chasing behind us, and were surprisingly following right behind us in hot pursuit unwilling to let go, chasing us to the point that even after A'Du and I ran in a big circle, we still could not get rid of them ..... I ate too much, and after being chased by those bastards, I almost vomited. A'Du pulled me from a small alleyway and onto the street, in front of me clearly was a group of men riding horses towards us, these men from afar also looked like Yu Lin Lang.

It couldn't be an ambush laid earlier by that group of bastards, right? I supported myself on my knees panting, this time, we could only resort to fighting.

The clamor behind us grew nearer, that group of scoundrels caught up. At this point, the torch that this troop of horsemen were holding had also already closed in, the person leading the troop rode atop a tall white horse, I suddenly realized that I actually know this person, and couldn't help but be overjoyed, "Pei Zhao! Pei Zhao!"



Pei Zhao on his horse did not see me clearly, he only looked at me with suspicion. I once again jumped up and shouted out his name, the person next to him lifted the lantern and stepped forward, clearly illuminating my face.

I saw Pei Zhao jump down from his horse in a flash, and directly, salute me, "Crown....."

Without waiting for him to say the second word, I urgently interrupted him,



“Crown what crown? Behind me is a bunch of bastards chasing after me, quickly help me stop them!”

Pei Zhao said, “Yes!” He stood up and pulled out the long sword from his waist, and in a deep voice ordered, “Face the enemy!”

Behind him, resounded the sound of his men pulling out their swords, at this point, the gang of ass-holes had also already arrived, seeing this area brightly lit by the torch lantern, Pei Zhao stands in front with his sword, they couldn’t help slowing their pace. The several people who took the lead even difficultly squeezed out a smile, except their teeth chattered lightly, “Pei..... Pei..... General Pei.....”

Pei Zhao sees the Yu Lin Lang, couldn’t help but suddenly change his expression, he asked, “What do you think you’re doing?”

Pei Zhao is the chief general, responsible for the Yu Lin Lang. This time those men will definitely suffer some hardships, I pulled A’Du along, took advantage of the distraction, and happily slipped away.

A’Du and I jump over the wall to return, A’Du’s qing gong [6] is very good, completely soundless, an even taller wall, she just lightly carried me, and both of us had already gotten up. Deep in the night, it was frighteningly quiet all around. This place is empty and big, always so quiet.

We’re like two little mice, quietly sneaking in. It was pitch-black everywhere, there were only a few swaying lights in the distance. The carpet was very thick, soft and silent as I stepped on, I felt my bed, my comfortable bed ah..... as I thought about it, I couldn’t help yawning, “So sleepy.....”

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[1] Huqin 胡琴; A family of bowed string instruments, more specifically, a spike fiddle popularly used in Chinese music.

[2] Gong Zi 公子; Son of a feudal prince or high official.

[3] Kuai Xue 快靴; A type of thin-soled boots for military men.

[4] Yu Lin 羽林; Imperial armed escorts, 郎 lang: a male youth.

[5] 兔子爷相公: 兔子 – Rabbit; also a term to call male prostitutes as well as a term for gays; 相公 – meaning gentleman or husband; also a term to call male

prostitutes. They are basically calling her a string of words all meaning male prostitute.

[6] Qing Gong 轻功; light martial arts; practiced for things like stealth, and running on air, and so on.



*suteki:* I hope you all have enjoyed chapter 2 of Eastern Palace. Karma and I have spent hours trying to make the translation as accurate as possible. Especially Karma, she’s translating even when she’s fasting, so it must be tough!

And for those who are wondering how regular we will be releasing chapters for Eastern Palace, it’ll most likely be once a week or once every 2 weeks.

I think Xiao Feng is such a witty female heroine, I love her boldness and carefree attitude.

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# Chapter 3

[Eastern Palace](#) · [Novel Translations](#)

# Eastern Palace 《东宫》 – Chapter 3

[July 28, 2014](#)[November 13, 2015](#) karma

**Disclaimer: This chapter has been translated by sutekii & karma.**

## Chapter 3

A'Du suddenly jumped up, her jumping also gave me a fright. At this point, bright light suddenly surrounded us, someone had lit a candle, and a group of people holding lanterns rushed in, of course the one leading was Yong Niang. From afar with her eyes brimming with tears, she threw herself down and kneeled, "Crown Princess, please punish this slave with death."



I hate people kneeling, I hate Yong Niang, I hate people calling me Crown Princess, I hate bringing up the death punishment at every turn.

"Ayy, have I not returned in one piece."

Every time I return, Yong Niang will always do this, even if she's not tired of it, I am. Sure enough, Yong Niang immediately stopped her tears, quickly ordered a palace maid to come forward and help me make myself presentable, took the male garments that I was wearing off with no explanation, changed me into my least favorite clothes, three layers inside and three layers outside, layer after layer of a mixed print, like a thousand layered cake, even after peeling for a long time, you still won't see the peanut. Yong Niang said to me, "Tomorrow is Zhao Liang Di's birthday, Crown Princess don't forget, a little pandering is always good."

I tiredly swayed side to side, those palace maids were still washing my face, with a large towel wrapped around my dress lapel, my hair in the back was spread open and separated, carefully combed by them, the combing caused me to be even more sleepy. I felt like a doll, completely at their mercy, Yong Niang kept nagging, saying a lot of things to me, I did not hear a word of it, because I had finally fallen asleep.

This nap, I slept very soundly, I had eaten till I was full, and had been chased for most of the night; running around like that was really too exhausting. As I was sleeping soundly, I suddenly heard a loud “bang”, I opened my eyes and woke up, only realizing then that it was already broad daylight, turns out this one nap actually had me sleeping until the sun was three poles high (afternoon). I saw Li Cheng Yin just as he was entering in a rage, Yong Niang and the maids fearfully knelt down in a frenzy to greet him.

I still had my hair down, and hadn't washed my face or changed my clothes, but I could only climb up from the bed, not because I'm afraid of Li Cheng Yin, but if I quarrel with him lying in bed, I would be too much at a disadvantage, too unimposing.



He obviously came to attack me with more accusations, coldly looking at me, “You can still sleep?”

I gave a big yawn, and then said, “What did I do that I can’t sleep?”

“You woman, how can you be this vicious?” He furrowed his brows looking at me, his stare was like two frigid arrows, as though wanting to drill two holes in my body, “Don’t put on an act!”

This was not his usual quarrel routine with me, I felt perplexed, “What’s the matter?”

“What’s the matter?” He gnashed his teeth in anger and told me, “After Zhao Liang Di ate the longevity noodles you sent, she threw up and had diarrhea. How can you be so intentionally vicious?”

I exaggeratedly rolled my eyes at him, “I did not send any longevity noodles to anyone, who ate it and had diarrhea is none of my business!”

“You have the guts to do it but not admit it?” His tone was contemptuous, “So girls from Xi Liang, are all this shameless!”

I was furious, Li Cheng Yin has argued with me for three years, he knows best how to infuriate me, I jumped up, “Girls from Xi Liang wouldn’t dare to do something and not admit it, for something I didn’t do, why should I admit? We Xi Liang women always act frankly, not to mention a Zhao Liang Di; if I wanted to harm someone, I only need to take my knife and fight them with all my might, I wouldn’t use such an underhanded method like poison. Unlike you, coming and accusing people without distinguishing between what’s right and wrong, what dignified righteous Shangjing men are you?”

Li Cheng Yin angrily said, “Don’t think I don’t dare depose you! If I didn’t stake everything on this throne, then I wouldn’t tolerate you, vicious woman!!”

I burst out four words, “Do as you please.”

Li Cheng Yin was so furious he flicked his robes, turned and left, I was also so angry I couldn’t sleep, moreover my stomach also began aching, A’Du helped me rub it. Yong Niang was still kneeling there, she had clearly been frightened, her entire body shaking all over. I said, “Let him be, every year he threatens to depose me, he just hadn’t said it this year.”

Yong Niang’s eyes were gleaming with tears again, “Crown Princess forgive me..... those longevity noodles, your servant had someone send them over.....”



I was shocked, Yong Niang said, “But your servant really did not put anything in it, your servant just thought, today is Zhao Liang Di birthday, if Crown Princess did not bestow anything, it seemed a bit..... a bit..... Crown Princess was still sleeping comfortably, had not awakened, your servant just took the liberty, ordered some longevity noodles to be delivered, did not expect Zhao Liang Di would eat it and vomit and have diarrhea..... please Crown Princess punish your servant with death.....”

I unconcernedly said, “Since we didn’t rig this up, then her getting diarrhea has nothing to do with us, what is there to be punished with death for. Come on, quickly get up, I’m tired to death of you kneeling there..”

Yong Niang stood up, but remained full of tears, “Crown Princess, that word is taboo, should not be spoken.”

Isn’t it just a word ‘death’? Who in this world will not die? These Eastern palace rules are the most annoying, can’t say this, can’t do that, I’m about to be suffocated.

Because of Zhao Liang Di’s vomit and diarrhea incident, naturally her birthday did not go so well. Li Cheng Yin finally could not take it anymore and made a scene. If he wanted to depose me it was impossible, his Fu Huang [1] doesn’t even need to say anything, even the Tai Fu [2]’s will intervene. But I’m still unlucky, because in front of the Empress Dowager, Li Cheng Yin reported me. Empress Dowager sent me several “Moral Instructions for Women”, “Womanly Conduct” and other books of that nature, punishing me to copy every book ten times. I was shut in the room, crying out to the heavens, but there is no response; I cried out to the earth, but it is ineffective. I copied for many days in a row, copying until my fingers were sore but I still hadn’t finished.

After having copied all the books for a fifth time, Yong Niang told me some news, a maid, Xu Niang, that waited on Li Cheng Yin has met with a joyous event, this time Zhao Liang Di is surely vexed.

I confusedly asked her, “What do you mean, has met with a joyous event?”

Yong Niang almost not taking a breath, spoke to me in circles for a long time, I only then suddenly realized, so meeting with a joyous event is to have a baby.

I excitedly wanted to watch the ruckus, these past few years after arriving in



Shangjing, I have yet to see anyone around me give birth to a baby, this kind of rare thing, of course I want to join in. In the end, I was firmly held back by Yong Niang, “Crown Princess, you must not go! It is said that Crown Prince had once promised Zhao Liang Di, that he would never be unfaithful. On that day, it was only because Crown Prince was drunk, that he would favour Xu Niang. Now Zhao Liang Di is in tears weeping, venting that she’s unhappy. If Crown Princess were to visit Xu Niang right now, Zhao Liang Di will think that Crown Princess is deliberately provoking.....”

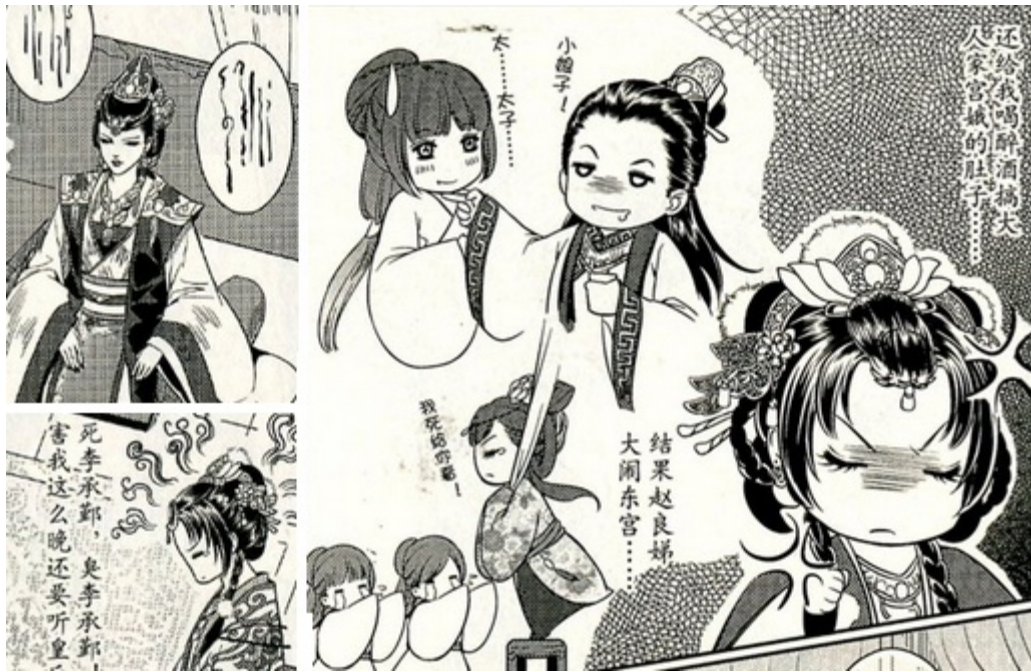
I really don’t understand why Yong Niang would think like that, all the people in Eastern Palace are so strange, when they want things, they will always go around in circles after circles. I sighed, Yong Niang said Zhao Liang Di would behave like that, maybe she really will think that way, I don’t want to fight with Li Cheng Yin again, if he reports me to Empress Dowager again, they might as well have me copy books to death.

At night, the Empress summoned me to the palace.

I rarely see the Empress alone, every time it was always with Li Cheng Yin. The words said to me by the queen were also barely limited to “rise” “be seated” “go rest”. This time she summoned me alone, Yong Niang looked extremely uneasy, she personally accompanied me to see the Empress.

A’Du waited outside Yong An palace for us, because she was unwilling to remove her gold inlaid knife from her waist, and was also unwilling to be too far away from me.

Actually, the Empress is very beautiful, she is not Li Cheng Yin’s birth mother, Li Cheng Yin’s birth mother was Shu Fei [3], legend has it that she was a beauty with incomparable looks, the emperor deeply doted on her, but unfortunately she soon died of illness after giving birth to Li Cheng Yin. The Empress had never had children, so Li Cheng Yin was brought to her palace to be raised, and then became the legitimate Crown Prince.



The Empress said a long string of words to me, to be honest I didn't quite understand, because the words were too scholarly..... The Empress probably also saw my as-if-I-had-fallen-into-the-middle-of-a-haze expression, she finally heaved a long sighed, "You are, after all, still too young, the affairs of the Eastern Palace, how come you do not take to heart? Forget about it, I have ordered people to prepare a secluded palace, and ordered that Xu Niang to enter the palace to give birth there. As for Zhao Liang Di, you should try your best to pacify her, do not let Yin Er (Li Cheng Yin) worry."

These few colloquial sentences, I finally understood. The Empress also said a few things to Yong Niang, she still spoke in a genteel and scholarly manner, I guessed it was criticism about Yong Niang not exerting enough effort to teach me, because Yong Niang's face turned ashen, and she kept kneeling while repeating, "This servant deserves death."

Seeing the Empress is very boring, the scolding is even more boring. I secretly draw circles on the carpet with the tips of my toes, the carpets here were all gifts from the Tocharians [4], long fur under my foot as soft as snow, I draw a circle, a part of the flowers on the carpet turn white, then again I draw over in the opposite direction, the flowers on the carpets return to their original color..... Then I use the tips of my toes to draw over again, the flowers discolor.... I was just having fun, when I suddenly heard the Empress cough, I looked up at her staring at me.

I hurriedly sat up straight and retracted my feet inside my skirt.

Coming out of Yong An palace, Yong Niang said to me, “Crown Princess, please show some compassion for your servant, if you are to act rashly and cause trouble again, your servant will not regret dying.....”

I said impatiently, “Alright, I got it! I have been locked up in the room copying books for so many days, how have I caused trouble ah!”

Yong Niang pacifyingly said to me, “Crown Princess these past few day has indeed been very obedient, but the Empress has implored Crown Princess to console Zhao Liang Di, Crown Princess must go and see her.”

I’m boringly cracked my own fingers, and resentfully said, “Li Cheng Yin won’t allow me near the place where that woman lives, I don’t want to see her, or Li Cheng Yin will start fighting with me again.”

“This time it’s not the same, this time Crown Princess is under the Empress’s orders, and can honorably go and see Zhao Liang Di. Moreover, Crown Princess should take advantage of this opportunity, and express goodwill to Zhao Liang Di, Zhao Liang Di is currently upset with the Xu Niang situation, if Crown Princess slightly reveals the intention of befriending her, Zhao Liang Di will feel very grateful. If Crown Princess at this time can rectify the relationship with Zhao Liang Di, then at that time even if Xu Niang gives birth to a baby boy, nothing will come of it.....”

I don’t know what Yong Niang is thinking of all day, but she was once the Empress Dowager’s most trusted female retainer, before I had officially been conferred the title of Crown Princess, she was sent to my side, to accompany me to learn the ceremonial etiquette.

Afterwards she accompanied me through my most difficult period at the Eastern Palace, at that time Li Cheng Yin was not in the least concerned about me, Eastern Palace was full of snobbish eyes, I had just arrived, and was also a Xi Liang person, I was frequently laughed at, even the inner palace grunt workers would dare to bully me. I was extremely homesick, all day I only knew how to hold A’Du and cry, crying and crying until I developed a serious illness, Li Cheng Yin even stubbornly said I was feigning illness, and did not allow anyone to inform the Imperial Academy of Medicine or the palace. It dragged on until I could no longer swallow a single drop of water, it was Yong Niang together with

A'Du, who stayed at my bedside, and spoon by spoon fed me medicine, snatching me back from hell.

So, although sometimes the way she thinks is very strange, I would follow along with her, after all, in the Eastern Palace besides A'Du, only Yong Niang sincerely treats me well.

“Alright then, I will go see her.”

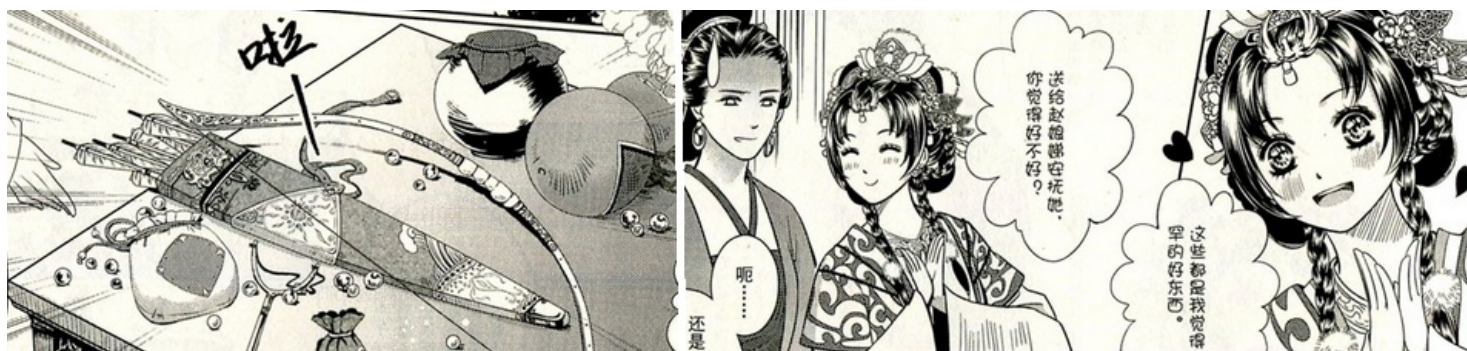
“Not only visit, Crown Princess should also send Zhao Liang Di a few valuable and rare gifts, to win her over.”

Rare gift, what would count as a rare gift?

I racked my brains.

Finally, I solemnly chose a pair of Gao Chang [5] tribute bow and arrow, two cases of jade chess pieces, some holding play clutches, and also Bai Yi tribute passion fruit wine. When Yong Niang saw these things, the expression on her face was extremely strange.

“Uh ... .. I think these are all quite rare and good treasures” I looked at Yong Niang's expression, “Do you think these are not good?”



Yong Niang sighed and said, “It would be better to let your servant choose some gifts in place of the Crown Princess.”

The gifts Yong Niang ultimately chose, I have also seen, what He Tian jade inlaid bracelet, pure gold brooches studded with jade, red moon coral hairpin, Chi Long necklace embedded with pearls..... and then some Yan Jasmine cream powder, it was either something dazzling or delicious. I really didn't think these things are good rare treasures, but Yong Niang confidently said, “Zhao Liang Di will surely see Crown Princess painstaking efforts.”

However, this meeting with Zhao Liang Di, I was actually rather looking



forward to it. I only met Zhao Liang Di once, it was the second day after I was crowned Crown Princess, and she was elevated to Niang Di, and had come according to etiquette to pay homage to me. The only impression I have of her is a woman wearing clothes, surrounded by people bowing to me, because we were separated too far away, I couldn't clearly see what she looked like.

But Li Cheng Yin really loves her. I heard he had originally refused to marry me, it was the Empress who promised him, that after I was coronated Crown Princess, he could elevate Zhao Liang Di to Liang Di, thus, I became that most hated person. Li Cheng Yin always worried I would bully Zhao Liang Di, so he usually would not let her into my palace, and even more so, did not allow me to enter her palace either. I do not know who he heard it from, said that Xi Liang woman are inclined to be jealous by nature, and can use sorcery and cast poisonous spells to harm people, so usually when I quarrel with him, the minute I mention Zhao Liang Di, he will jump like a cat whose tail had been stepped on, for fear that I really will go and hurt Zhao Liang Di.

Sometimes I really am a little jealous of Zhao Liang Di, it's not anything else, but just jealous she has someone who will treat her like that. Here in Shangjing I am without friends, alone and with no one to rely on, although Yong Niang treats me very well, but I don't love speaking with her, there are some things that even if spoken, she would not understand.

For example our Xi Liang nights, we release the horses running into the depths of the desert with the wind blowing past the leaves of the Elder tree, producing a "Shala Shala" sound. And the blue-tinted purple night sky hanging that low, so clear, so moist like a grape jelly, cool and tart, after sipping a bit, you can sip it into the corner of your mouth. Yong Niang has never even seen grapes, so how would she know what grape jelly is. Although A'Du understands my words, but no matter how enthusiastically I speak, at most she will just look at me quietly. Every time around this time, I will become especially homesick, and I start to think of my bustling Xi Liang. The more I think of Xi Liang, the more I hate the desolate and cheerless Eastern Palace.

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[1] 父皇 Fu Huang; imperial father

[2] 太傅 Tai Fu; Grand Tutor. I think were officials who assisted with managing

the country/state/etc. 《太子太傅》也包括在内. So the grand tutor is just one job of the 太傅s.

[3] 淑妃 Shu Fei; ‘The Decent Consort’ is the generally accepted term; though the word Shu means ‘warm and virtuous’. Concubines are given titles according to their ranks. During the Sixteen States period, Shu Fei was the highest ranking imperial concubine out of nine ranks.

[4] The Tocharians or Tokharians were inhabitants of medieval oasis city-states on the northern edge of the Tarim Basin (modern Xinjiang, China)

[5] 高昌 Gāo Chāng is the site of an ancient oasis city built on the northern rim of the inhospitable Taklamakan Desert in Xinjiang, China. A busy trading center, it was a stopping point for merchant traders traveling on the Silk Road.

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# Chapter 4

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# Eastern Palace 《东宫》 – Chapter 4

[August 11, 2014](#)[November 13, 2015](#) karma

Disclaimer: This chapter has been translated by sutekii & karma.

## Chapter 4



It was a sunny afternoon when I went to see Zhao Liang Di. Yong Niang accompanied me followed by twelve palace maids, some carried sandalwood incense burners, some waved feathered fans, some were holding those brocade boxes loaded with gifts. We walked like this in a procession within the Eastern Palace, it was extremely eye-catching. When we arrived at Zhao Liang Di's residence, she had probably long heard about my arrival so she had the doors open, and stood on the steps waiting for me.

Her yard had a very fragrant Trifoliate Orange tree [1] planted, little premature green oranges clustered together, like countless small lanterns. I had never seen it before, and felt it was very amusing, I twisted my stomach and went forward to look. Being distracted for a moment, I didn't pay attention to my footing, stepped on my robe, and just "pa" fell to the floor.

Although I painstakingly practiced over these last three years, I still often step on my robes. This sudden fall was much too embarrassing, Zhao Liang Di came forward at once and held my arm, "Elder sister! Sister, are you alright?"

Actually, I was still two years younger than her..... But as she helped me up, I still grimaced in pain, it was simply too painful.



Zhao Liang Di supported me all the way in, and then ordered tea to be served. I had really fallen hard, sitting on the chair, I dared not move, simple movements caused my muscle to twitch in pain.

Yong Niang took this opportunity to present those gifts, Zhao Liang Di from her seat gave me a curtsy, "Thank you sister for bestowing these gifts, younger sister is embarrassed and dare not accept."

I didn't know what to say, fortunately there is Yong Niang, she supported Zhao Liang Di, "Liang Di please rise. Actually, the Crown Princess has always wanted to visit Liang Di, but just had no chance to. This time, the empress had ordered Xu Niang to be brought into the palace, Crown Princess was worried that Liang Di's place here would lack care, therefore especially came here today. These gifts, were all carefully selected by the Crown Princess. Although it is slightly superficial, but it is just a small token of affection. In the future if Liang Di is



lacking anything, just order someone to fetch it. In this Eastern Palace, the Crown Princess regards Niang Di as her valued right-hand man, really hope that Liang Di does not feel any distance.”



Zhao Liang Di said, “Elder sister’s caring heart, younger sister understands.”

To be honest, what they said I didn’t really understand, I just felt suffocated. However, Zhao Liang Di was not as beautiful as I expected, but she’s very kind, her voice was very warm and gentle. Although I don’t like her, but I also feel I’m unable to really hate her.



I had been in Zhao Liang Di’s palace for an entire afternoon, listening to Zhao Niang Di [2] and Yong Niang talk. Yong Niang really seemed to be liked by Zhao Liang Di, she spoke very eloquently, causing Zhao Liang Di to cover her face with her sleeve and laugh, and then Zhao Liang Di praised me, praised that I have such a competent court lady.

Coming out from Zhao Liang Di’s palace, I met Pei Zhao. He was on duty today,

leading the Yu Lin Army coming out from the room, however he didn't say anything because with armor on his body, he only cupped his hands and saluted me, "This lesser commander pays respect to the Crown Princess."

"At ease."

Recalling last time he fortunately lent out a helping hand, I could not help but feel gratitude, "General Pei, that night, many thanks ah!" Otherwise I would have been chased to death by those group of bastards. Although at worst, we could fight them before escaping, but those bastards were all Eastern Palace's Yu Lin Langs, if they hold a grudge after the fight and found out that I was actually the Crown Princess, that would be far from good.

But Pei Zhao did not bat an eyelid, "What the Crown princess said, this lesser commander does not understand."

Before I could say a few more words to him, I had already been pulled away by Yong Niang. Back at the palace Yong Niang chided me, "There should not be direct contact between men and women, it is improper for the Crown Princess to have relations with the Chief of the Capital Guards."

It is improper for direct contact between men and women, if Yong Niang knew that when I slipped out, I often ate, drank wine, enjoyed listening to music and fought with men, she will definitely faint.

My thigh bruised a chunk, A'Du helped me apply ointment. I wanted to sneak out to play again, because I was finally done copying books. But recently Yong Niang has been keeping a close eye. I intended to quietly sneak out in the dead of night, but I didn't succeed, because that night Li Cheng Yin suddenly came.

Whoever lost, had to eat oranges. A'Du won four times in a row, causing me to eat four large oranges in a row. My stomach was full of acid water, and it was at this moment that Li Cheng Yin came.

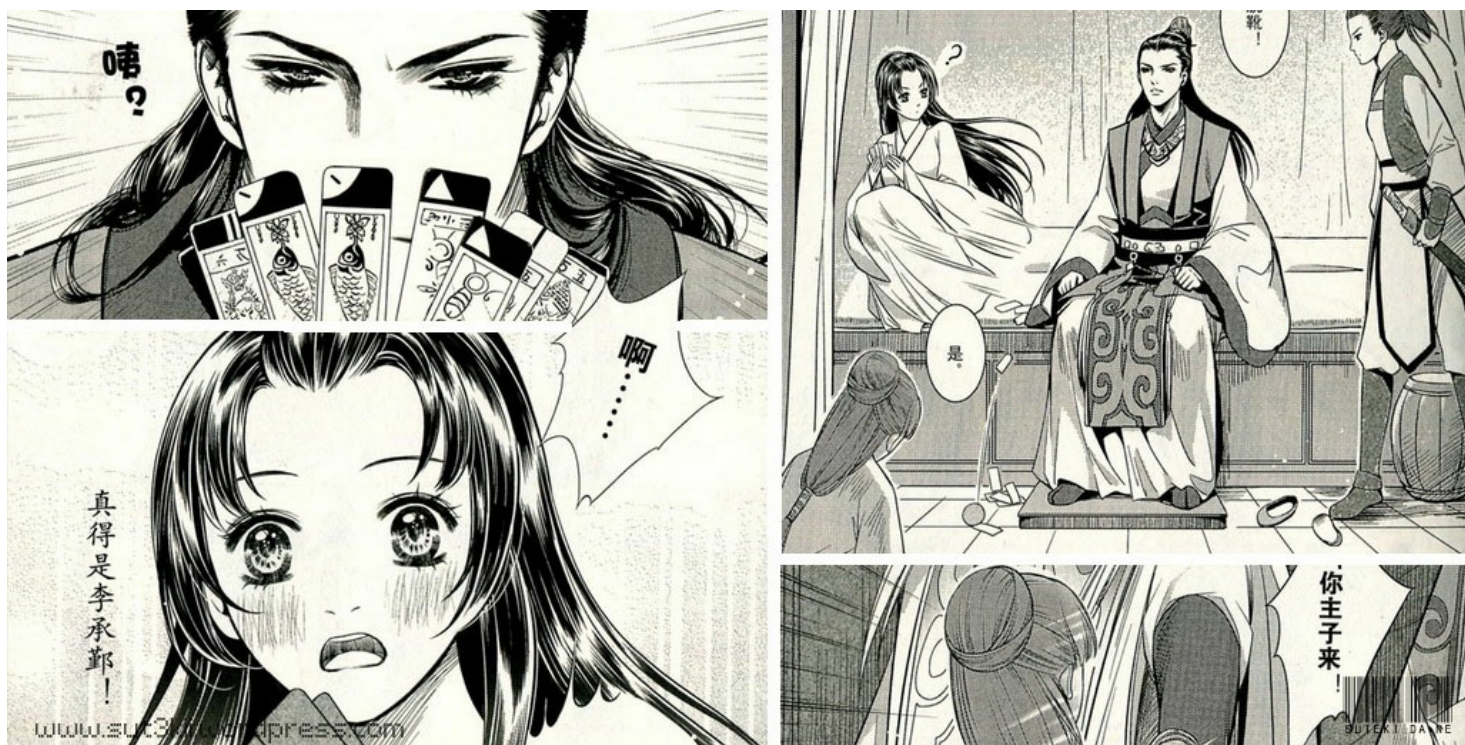






my shoes!”

At this time, the palace maid on night duty also woke up, seeing Li Cheng Yin unexpectedly sitting here, she immediately looked just like she’d seen a ghost, hearing him say that, she only then came to realization, and promptly came forward to help him take off his boots. Who knew Li Cheng Yin would lift his legs and kick her in the chest, “Tell your master to come!”



Her master, there was no other, at least in this palace her master should be me.

I helped that maid up, then pounded the table, “How can you kick people?”

“Well, I kicked! And I also want to kick you!”

A’Du pulled out the gold inlaid knife with a “shua”, I said coldly, “Did you come here to quarrel with me again?”

He suddenly smiled, “I did not come here to quarrel with you, I came here to sleep.”

Then he pointed at A’Du, “Get out!”





I did not know what he wanted, but I could see he didn't have any good intentions coming here, creating a disturbance like this, alarming many people. Those who had been asleep had all woken up, including Yong Niang. Yong Niang seeing him come so late at night, could not help but be both startled and elated; startled because of his angry look; elated, well, I reckon Yong Niang felt that him just coming here was a good thing, even if he came specifically to quarrel with me.

The minute Yong Niang came, the atmosphere wasn't so hostile anymore, she arranged someone to brew some tea, take the laundry, rinse the mouth, ready the nightgown..... Everyone was suddenly busy, disorderly and confusedly preparing grandly. I was surrounded by a bunch of people bustling around helping me freshen up, and then put on the nightgown, as I was coming out, Yong Niang was dragging A'Du away, originally A'Du was unwilling to leave, I didn't know what Yong Niang whispered into A'Du's ear, but A'Du blushed red and obediently left with her. In short, after the chaos and turmoil of war, suddenly in the palace there was only me and Li Cheng Yin left.



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不过这好像是我第一次  
看见他不穿朝服的样子……

呀、你不走、  
 我走！  
 你自己在家  
 偷偷睡吧！  
 外  
 SUITEKI DA

好困……

这次忍了，  
大人不记小人过。

好困……

可忍孰不可忍！

你干吗来这里  
跟我抢被子？

你以为  
愿意……

Se Se is Zhao Liang Di's name, whenever he said her name, his expression and tone is always especially gentle.

I remembered in the afternoon, those words that Zhao Liang Di had said, and also the words Yong Niang said, I finally somewhat understood, and then suddenly my heart-felt a little sad.

Actually, I don't really care. Before when he wouldn't come, I also don't think there was anything to feel sad about, but tonight he came, and I actually feel a little sad.

I know married couples are supposed to sleep together, but I also know, he never thought of me as his wife.

His wife should be Zhao Liang Di. Today I visited Zhao Liang Di, and also sent her a good many gifts, she pitied me, and so advised him to come here.

We Xi Liang women never want others to pity us.

I sat up, and said to him, "You can go."

He coldly said, "Rest assured, once it's morning I'll leave."

He turned his back on me and fell asleep again.

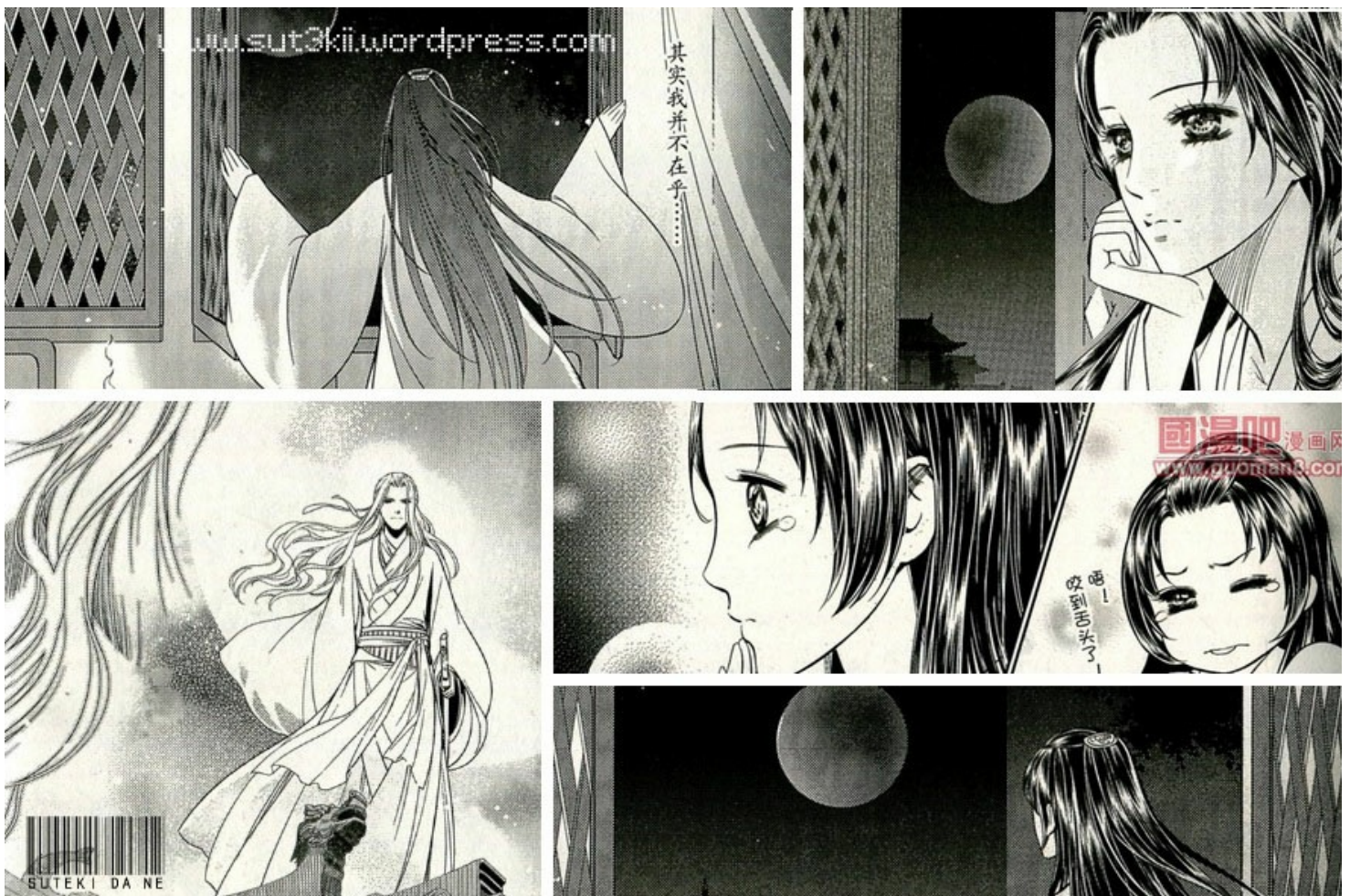
I could only get up, get dressed and sit at the table.

A single gauze lantern sat on the table, the brimming light of the red candle inside was covered by the screen, a nice lump of light, faint and warm, seeming as though it would overflow, my heart also seemed like something wanted to overflow. I began to think of Dad, Mommy, I started thinking of my brothers, thinking of my little red horse, I started thinking of my Xi Liang.

Every time I feel lonely, I would think of Xi Liang, the days in Shangjing are always very lonely, so I always think of Xi Liang.

Right at this moment, I suddenly saw a faint shadow in the window.





I was startled, stretched out my hand and pushed the window open.

The cool night air caused me to shiver, outside there was no one in sight, only the cool moonlight.

I was about to shut the window, when I suddenly saw in the distance a lump of white shadow on a tree, taking a closer look, it turned out to be a man dressed in white.

I was stunned, must know that this is Eastern Palace, security is tight, could it be that an assassin intruded?

This assassin in white robes was really too daring.

I stared at him, he looked at me, the night was so quiet that even the sound of the wind blowing could be heard, the light on the table swayed restlessly from being blown by the wind, while he stood on the tree top, quietly looking at me. The wind blew the leaves and branches up and down, his entire body bathed in the moonlight, also slightly undulating; and behind him a bright moon, a gale blew his sleeve and long hair, looking as if he was standing in the center of the moon.

I recognized him, it was Gu Jian, that strange person. Why did he come here?

I nearly bit my tongue. In the time that I blinked my eyes, that Gu Jian had already disappeared.

Either I had seen it wrong, or I was dreaming.

I think I made myself homesick, whatever I did, I would be listless. The next day Li Cheng Yin really left early in the morning, and also never came again. Yong Niang take that evening as a happy occasion, and any mention of it would have her beaming with joy, I don't have the heart to tell her, in fact, nothing happened.

Don't underestimate my young age, when A'Du and I wandered the streets aimlessly, we once went to the public entertainment center out of curiosity and stood in a circle and watched. We've never eaten pork meat, but we've seen pigs run.

Yong Niang was grateful for Zhao Liang Di's kindness. And one time persuaded her to come over and play cards with me.

That day I also knew how to come back, I kept losing, kept losing, could not even win one hand. Losing in affairs of the heart, fine, but even in gambling I was losing; Yong Niang even thought I was suddenly enlightened, and was intentionally losing to Zhao Liang Di to coax her happy.

Zhao Liang Di from then on often came over to play cards with me, her words were also quite charming, such as her complimenting the Xi Liang boots I wore, "We from the Central Plains, never have such exquisite leather."

I was so happy that I promised her, next time if Father sent someone over, I would have them bring a few good boots and give them to her.





As Zhao Liang Di was playing cards, she asked me, “When does the Crown Princess plan to visit Xu Niang?”

I couldn’t understand why I had to enter the palace to see Xu Niang, she was living well in the palace, she had someone appointed by the Empress to take care of her, why would I still want to go and see her? Besides, Yong Niang had once told me, Zhao Liang Di had made a scene because of Xu Niang’s matter, cried for several days, causing Li Cheng Yin to swear, that even if Xu Niang gave birth to a son, he would never give Xu Niang a glance. I felt that Zhao Liang Di definitely hated Xu Niang quite a bit, however in spite of that, she still wants to bring it up in front of me, feigning generous.

Yong Niang to the side said, “Right now, Xu Niang has entered the palace, without the Empress’s summon, it is also inconvenient for Crown Princess to visit.”

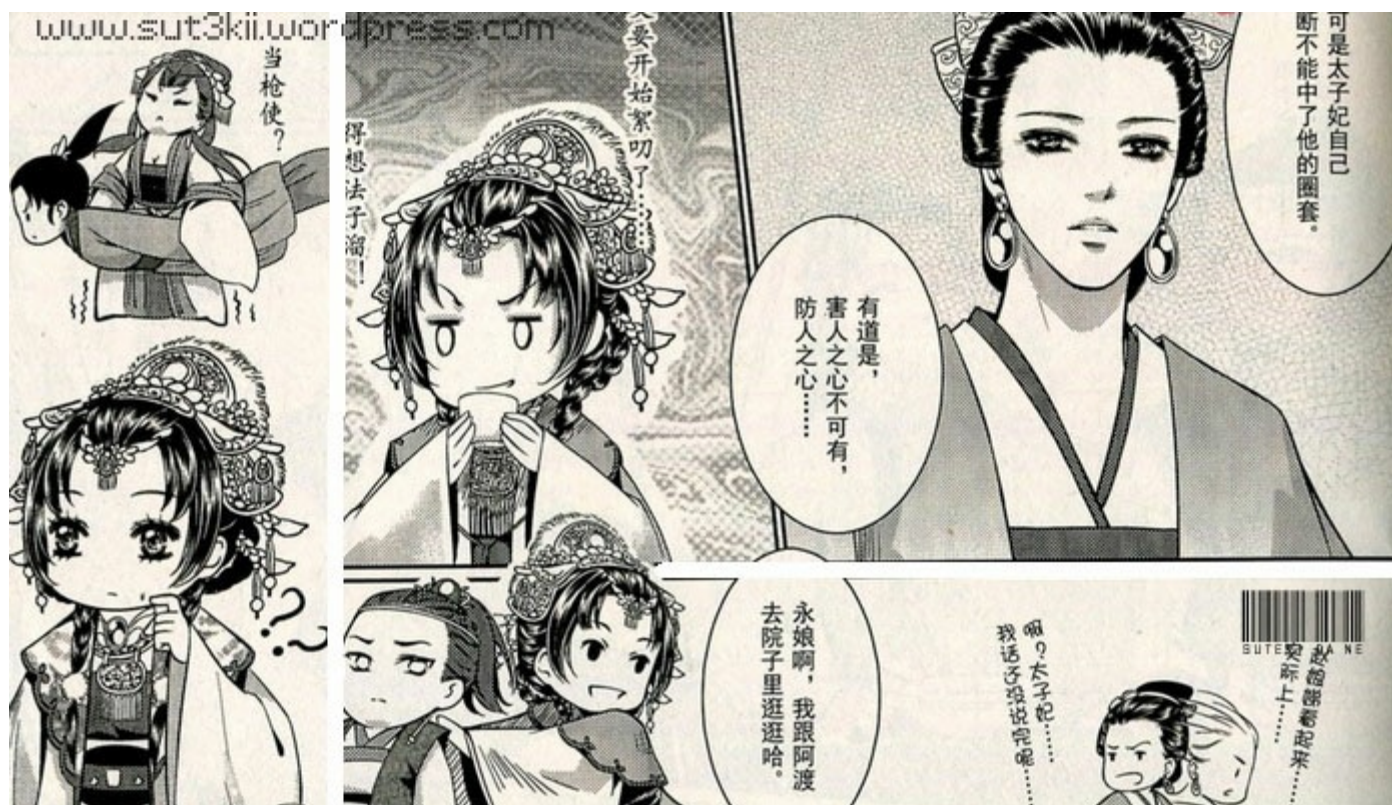
Zhao Liang Di gave a “oh” sound, as if taking it in stride. That day my card luck was pretty good, I won some money. After Zhao Liang Di left, Yong Niang said to



me, “Crown Princess must be vigilant, don’t be used as a spear by Zhao Liang Di.”

Sometimes the words Yong Niang says I don’t understand. For example, this phrase “used as a spear” [3].

Yong Niang said, “Zhao Liang Di hates Xu Niang this much, she will definitely try various ways to ensure her child isn’t born. What she wants to do, Crown Princess might as well let her be, and happily let the situation take its course, however Crown Princess definitely must not let yourself fall into her trap.”



Once again, I really couldn’t understand. The child is already within Xu Niang’s womb, what other methods can Zhao Liang Di use to ensure that the child isn’t born. Yong Niang said, “There are many ways, Crown princess is an upright person, there’s no need to inquire about these things.”

I think Yong Niang intentionally said it like that, because I never felt I was an upright person, but once she said this, I felt too embarrassed to shamelessly press further.

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[1] 枸橘 Gōu Jú – The Trifoliate Orange, also known as the Chinese Bitter Orange, is a fruit native to northern China and Korea and resembles a small orange.

[2] 赵良娣 Zhao Liang Di; 赵娘娘 Zhao Niang Di – Zhao Liang Di is her name

where else Niang Di is the title she’s bestow with.

[3] 当枪使 Dāng Qiāng Shǐ – A phrase, lit. Used/act as a spear; fig. to be a tool/ to be used as cannon fodder. Originally I was going to use ‘become Zhao Liang Di’s tool’, but changed it because Xiao Feng should’ve understand what that meant. The reason she didn’t understand is because it is a figurative phrase.

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# Chapter 5

## 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 5

For those who wanted to read Ch 1-4, you can read it at Sutekii's blog [here](#). I'm also looking for someone who could help me edit the English translations, so if anyone is interested please email me at sam.michelle.lee@gmail.com. This is my first time translating a novel, so I'm not really good at it, but hopefully my translations didn't ruin the story for you XP. Anyways, Enjoy =)!!!!

The weather is slowly getting colder, I finally got a chance to sneak outside with A'Du.

Spending time on the streets is good: people come and go, many carts lining up like dragons and moving like water nonstop [1], and very crowded. We went to the tea shop to listen to stories. No one knew where the original storyteller went, they got another storyteller. However, the storyteller did not know the story about the heavenly sword and only told stories about the imperial court that happened a few years ago.

"Back then Western Liang was defeated, since then whenever the Celestial Empire [2] army approached them, they would be so scared that they would throw their flags away, an acknowledgement of defeat. The declared emperor was kindhearted, and decided to form a bond with Western Liang. In addition, the emperor had granted a marriage to Princess Mingyuan to the Western Liang Khan [3]. The peaceful relationship between the two countries lasted for ten more years, until the unexpected death of the old Western Liang Khan. The new Khan was very ambitious, declaring a war against the Celestial Empire. The Celestial Empire took control of the borders of Western Liang. The new Khan saw the powers of the Celestial Empire, but it was too late to regret. The new Khan decided to offer her daughter for marriage to the Celestial Empire in exchange for a lenient treatment....."

In the tea shop, everyone stood up and laughed, while A' Du jumped up and broke the cup. Usually, A' Du would stop me from fighting, but this time I'm afraid she cannot help but hurt someone, so I pulled her out of the tea shop.

The sun is shining brightly outside, I remember Princess Mingyuan, she was a good-looking woman, dressed differently from women from Western Liang. When she died from illness, my father was very sad.

Father was kind to her, Father said: "Being good to her means being good to the whole Central Plains."

We Western Liang people always believes that if we treat others good, then other people would treat us good too. Unlike the people in the Capital, always thinking too much, face to face say one thing, but do another from behind people's backs.

If it was three years ago, I would have fight with the people in the tea shop, but now I feel discouraged.

A' Du and I sat at the bridge side to rest, on the river the sail of the boat collected a lot of wind , the sailor was holding onto a long pole stick, all of a sudden putting the stick underwater, then slowly moved backwards one step at a time to go. I remember the time when I first went to the capital, when I saw a boat, I would make a big fuss out of nothing, how can a small cart move in water? I was even more surprised to see the bridge, resembling like a rainbow, who built the stones into a rainbow? At Western Liang, although the river water is very clear and shallow, the river water made a "qua la la" sound, even horses can jump across the river, the river does not have any boats nor any bridges.

After coming to the Capital, I saw a lot of things that I have not seen in the past, but I don't feel happy at all.

Just when I was lost in thoughts, suddenly not far away, there was a "thump" sound, followed by someone shouting: "Come on people ah! My brother fell into

river! Hurry and rescue him ah!"

I looked up, not far away stood a seven to eight year old girl crying: "Help save my brother. He fell into the river!"

I saw a little head floating on the water surface and then it sank again. I jumped into the water without hesitation to save the child, forgetting that I couldn't swim. By the time I grabbed onto the child's arm, I don't know how much saliva I had choked onto. I kept thinking this was bad, not being able to save the child, but also causing myself to drown. It doesn't matter if I drowned to death, but no one would take care of A' Du. She doesn't even know the road to get back to Western Liang..... I drank a lot of water. When I sank into the river water, A' Du pulled me out of the water, but I was unconscious at that time. A' Du placed me on a large stone at the riverside, I spit out a lot of water. I remember the first time when I was at Eastern Palace, I saw a crystal fish tank with goldfish inside. I felt that it was extremely rare to see it. How could the fish be so big and cute with its' plump belly, but also be able to slowly spit out bubbles? Now I understand why, because the fish's belly was filled with water.

A' Du was all wet from top to bottom, she crouched down beside me, clothes still dripping water. She looked anxiously at me, I knew if I don't wake up, this silly girl would cry.

"A' Du ....." I was feeling dizzy and I spit out a mouthful of water, "Where's the child?....."

A' Du brought the child from the water to show me, his body was dripping wet, a pair of teary eyes looking at me.

I got up feeling dizzy, there were quite a lot of people surrounding us, which made the place feel very crowded. I would always go on the streets to enjoy the excitement, but this time I wasn't expecting to be the centre of attention. When A' Du and I were twisting our wet clothes to get rid of the water, someone was crying and yelling while breaking through the circle of people, "My child! My

child!"

Those two must be a married couple. Both of them are holding onto the child that fell into the water, bursting in tears. The sister of the child was standing on the side rubbing her eyes.

A family reunion, I felt very happy. The whole time at the tea house I was listening to the storyteller telling a story about a chivalrous hero, but I did not think that today I could become a hero. Who knew when my thought wasn't finished yet, the child who fell in the water would suddenly cry out: "Dad, it was that person who pushed me into the river," raising his hand and pointing at me.

I was dumbfounded, I don't know what was going on.

"I also saw that she pushed my brother into the river," the little girl said with her tendered voice. Listening to this seems like there are five sounds of thunder striking in my ear.

"How could people have such vicious hearts!"

"Did the child block you from doing something?"

"I really can't tell, you looked refined and educated, but how can you do such a beastly thing?"

"Polite scum! Dressed up animal[4]!"

"We cannot let them go !"

"Yes!"

"We cannot let them go!"

The people around rushed forward and shoved us. A' Du clearly doesn't know



what happened, and was just looking at me. The veins at the sides of my head were throbbing. I did not expect being a good person would be treated as a bad person. This made me so angry!

"Bring the child to the doctor and let the doctor look at the child!"

"You have to pay for the damages! There's no reason to push someone's child into the river. Pay money now!"

I said: "It was me who saved the child, how could you with your sharp white teeth insisted that I was the one who pushed the child down!"

"Did you not push the child? What were you saving him for?"

I almost spit out a mouthful of blood, this is ..... What kind of fallacious reasoning?

"My son suffered such a shock, please God seek a doctor!"

"Yes! First call a doctor to see where he is hurt!"

"Why would this child be hurt? I was the one who saved him ....."

"This bad person still doesn't admit it! Fine, if you don't want to pay for the damages, then you have to go to the court with us!"

Everyone around was yelling: "lock them in the court!"

I could hear everyone yelling: "Go to the court!"

I am so angry. If they want me to go to court then I will go, because I am not afraid since I'm innocent.

There were a bunch of people, making loud noises on the street to get people's

attention. The parents of the child were yelling: "Everyone look....no justice...pushing a child into the river, but crazily saying that you saved a child. Children cannot lie ....." "

A' Du and I were treated like street rats, vegetables were thrown at us, people around us fiercely spitting saliva. Luckily A' Du has good martial arts skills, none of the vegetables thrown at us had hit us, but the more they were like this, the more I was furious.

While waiting in the court, my anger had finally calmed down a bit, finally at a place with justice. This is the first time coming to a court, looks quite luxurious. Chang'an and Wanan are under jing zhao yan xia. Chang'an and Wanan combined are the first County. When the court start, you could feel the power in the atmosphere. A sound could be heard from the court workers on the side when the court started, then the Wannian magistrate slowly sat down and started asking for the names of both the defendant and the complainant.

I then knew that the couple's surname was Jia, who lived near the canal bank to sell fish for a living. When they asked me for my name, I naturally made up a fake name and called myself "Liang Xi." Usually, when I am wandering on the street, I would also use this name. When the Wannian County magistrate asked me what my job was, I stuttered. The advisor next to the magistrate looked at me, and couldn't help but ask: "Are you an unemployed person"

Saying that I was an unemployed person wasn't much of a difference, so I nodded my head in agreement.

Wannian County magistrate was listening to the nonsense from the couple, and asked two children. In a synchronized way, the two children said it was me who pushed the brother into the river. Wannian County magistrate stopped asking them and turned to me and asked: "Are you good at swimming?"

"No."

Wannian County magistrate then nodded his head and said: "You didn't purposely push the child into river, but you almost killed him, is there anything good to say about this?."

My breath jumped: "I saw him fell into the water, and went to save him. Why would I push him into the water? I push him down the water to do what?"

I said: "I saw him fell into the river, so without any hesitation, I jumped into the river to save him, only to realize that I couldn't swim as well!!"

Wannian county magistrate said: "This is nonsense! Human are selfish, especially for their own life. You don't know him and you can't swim, but you go save him? You push him in the water in order to save him! "

I looked at the sign behind him with four characters 'ming jing gao xuan' [5]. Seeing those characters on the sign behind him made the veins in my temple jump up and down. Every time the veins move, I wanted to hit him.

The Wannian county magistrate looked at me speechless: "You have no reason to push the child into the water. You caused the child to suffer from shock. Now I will sentence you to pay back money to the Jia family to compensate for the damage you had caused to the family."

I laughed coldly: "So this is how you judge a case?"

Wannian County magistrate slowly said: "Do you think I am unfair?"

"Of course unfair! The sky is clear and bright. Obviously, it was me who saved the child. You only listened to one side of the story and you already decided to not believe me."

"You said you didn't push the child into the river, do you have any witnesses or evidence?"

I looked at A' Du , said: "A' Du saw me save the child, she then saved us from drowning."

Wannian county magistrate said: Then let's summon her and question her."

I held back my breath, said: "She cannot speak."

Wannian county magistrate laughed: "So it's a mute person!" The moment he smiled, I knew the situation would get worse. As expected, A'Du took out her gold inlaid knife. If I didn't stop her by holding onto her, she would have already cut the magistrate's ears off. A'Du instantly stood still and looked at the magistrate angrily. The court workers around yelled: " You cannot carry a sharp knife in the court."

A'Du moved, didn't try to break free from my hand, used the knife to point, movements like a snowfall, and then soon afterwards, she put away the knife. She suddenly moved at lightning speed, without waiting for the crowd to react, the box of red sticks on the magistrate's table had made a "bo" sound, and bursted open. The red sticks inside the box was scattered on the ground, each stick has been split into half. The box contained at least six sticks, unexpectedly at a flash, all the sticks were split open by A'Du's knife, and also all the sticks were evenly split open right in the middle. Everyone at the court was stunned, people outside were making noises to create a disturbance: " Good trick!"

The court workers near the door were aware that this was not some trick, but knife skills. The magistrate was scared, his face changed colour, but pretending to be calm: " Someone come ..... come! How can you play with weapons in the court! "

The court workers advanced forward to take away A' Du's knife. I said: "If you dare to approach us, then she will cut off your ears and I'm not going to stop her from doing that."

Wannian County magistrate said: "This is the Wannian county court, are you

trying to rebel against us?"

I said: "Your honor, you have wronged me."

Wannian County magistrate said: "If you don't want to be a rebel, quickly hand over the knife....." He haven't finished speaking yet, but A'Du was already glaring at him. He corrected himself and said, "quickly put away the knife!"

A' Du placed the knife at the side of her waist. I think today we got ourselves into a big disaster. I don't know how to end it.

When the Wannian County magistrate saw that A' Du had put the knife away, he felt more relieved. The magistrate looked at the advisor beside him and then the advisor went down and whispered to me: "Two heroes good at fighting, which master do you work for? "

I did not understand what he was saying. I rolled my eyes and said: "Say it more clearly!"

The advisor lowered his voice: "Our magistrate meant which master do you two with extraordinary skills work for?"

I laughed. So this Wannian County magistrate would be scared of being at an disadvantage, seeing that we had made so much noise, he must have thought that we came from a powerful background. Eighty percent, he thinks that we are the martial artists raised from a wealthy family. I pondered for a while, if I mentioned Li Cheng Yin's name, then the magistrate would not believe us. I had an idea, I got it!

I quietly told him: "My master is General Pei Zhao."

The advisor suddenly realized something, turned around, secretly raised his hand and whispered: "So you are General Pei's people who are the Yu Lin Lang, no wonder you are so outstanding."

Those Yu Lin Lang bastards, I don't want to be involved with them, but I cannot say that. There was once this phrase: A wise person knows better than to fight when the odds are against them.

The advisor went back to his position, whispered something into the magistrate's ears.

Wannian County magistrate's complexion became hard to look at, finally hitting the gavel [6] once: "Since it is General Pei's people who follow orders, then we should invite General Pei to acknowledge this!"

My body became crooked, I did not expect the magistrate to use this type of move, I thought if Pei Zhao have duties in the Eastern Palace, then this situation would have become worse. If he doesn't come, and send some unknown person, then I would feel miserable. Do I have to fight at court, and then run away?

Later Pei Zhao told me that , although this Wannian County magistrate was merely just a seventh ranked court official, but because this court is in front of the imperial palace (meaning in the capital), he has to deal with the most difficult cases/tasks. People who are able to deal with these cases/tasks, are the most skilled and capable officials. Seeing that we had made so much noise on the court and unable to resolve this, hearing that we are Pei Zhao's people, the magistrate actually sent someone to invite Pei Zhao to come here. These officialdom things are messy, even if Pei Zhao let me talk the whole morning , I would not be able to understand.

Coincidentally, today Pei Zhao does not have any duties. When invited, he actually came.

Today, Pei Zhao didn't wear an armor, but a military official gown. I have never seen him dressed like that. Before I only met him a few times face to face and most of the time he was on duty at the Eastern palace, wearing an armor. When he came in, I couldn't even recognize him, because he looks so different from his



usual looks, like a refined scholar.

He looked at A'Du and I, remained calm and collected [7]. The Wannian County magistrate had already welcomed him from his seat, a face filled with smile: "I didn't want to disturb you, General Pei."

Notes:

[1] 车如流水马如龙 carts lining up like dragons and moving like water nonstop- this phrase is to emphasize that the streets are busy and crowded

[2] 可汗 Khan-a title equivalent to king or leader

[3] 天朝 Celestial Empire-name used to refer to China

[4] 衣冠禽兽 lit meaning:dressed up animal-describes a person as immoral and despicable

[5] 明镜高悬 min jin gao xuan-perspicacious and impartial in judgement

[6] 惊堂木 gavel-a block of wood that the magistrate use to get everyone's attention

[7] 不动声色 - not a word or movement

# Chapter 6

## 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 6

I was suppose to post this yesterday, but for some reason I couldn't save my corrections. Anyways, here is Chapter 6. Sorry for the delay  $\leq(._.)\geq$ .

"I heard my people have pushed an innocent child into the river. I need to come to the court and look myself."

"Yes, yes! General, please have a seat! "

"This is the magistrate's court. Please continue on the case, I'm just here to visit."

"Yes, yes!"

The Wannian county magistrate requested the complainant and defendant to start over again.

I felt this wasn't fun anymore.

The magistrate continued on and said: " People are selfish, they treasure their life. You don't know him and you can't swim. Were you feeling guilty of something that's why you saved him? If you didn't push the child, then you shouldn't be feeling guilty. Since you feel guilty, then there's no doubt it was you who pushed the child!"

I glared at him again and rolled my eyes.

Once again, the two children said it was me who pushed the brother into the water and I obviously denied it.

The magistrate purposely gave a hard time for Pei Zhao and asked: " General Pei,

you see... "

Pei Zhao said: "I request that someone bring the little girl to the back court and give her cookies to eat. I will summon her brother for questioning and then I will summon her later."

The magistrate agreed. When the little girl was taken away, Pei Zhao started to ask the little boy: "Just now, you said you were playing with water along the river side, but someone pushed you into the river. "

The child boldly said: " Yes."

"Did he pushed you from the back?"

"Yes."

"You don't have eyes at the back of your head. How did you know he pushed you and not other people if he pushed you from behind?"

The boy was at a loss for words, his eyes turned: "I remembered it incorrectly. He pushed me from the front. I was faced upwards when I fell into the water. "

"Oh, so you were faced upwards when you fell into the water." Pei Zhao finished asking and turned around, "Magistrate, take the child away and change his clothes. His body is all wet. If he doesn't change his clothes, he would get sick."

The magistrate ordered someone to take the child away. Pei Zhao then ordered someone to bring the little girl to the court. Pei Zhao pointed at me and asked the little girl: "Is that the person who pushed your older brother into the river?"

"It's him!"

"Your brother was playing by the river side, how did he push him in the river?"

"He just pushed him. He pushed my brother and then my brother fell into the

water."

Pei Zhao asked: "Did he push your brother's shoulders or did he push your brother's back?"

The little girl thought for a moment, said it with certainty: "He pushed my brother's back."

"Did you think clearly? Was it the shoulders or the back? "

The little girl hesitated for a moment, said: "If it was not the shoulders then it is the back. My brother was crouching there, he pushed my brother from the back."

Pei Zhao raised his hand: Magistrate, I finished asking. The two children's statements are different with a lot of questionable points, please judge this case carefully."

The magistrate's face kept changing from red to white for a long time, repeatedly said: "General Pei has said it correctly!" Constantly hitting the gavel, ordering someone to bring the little boy and then scolded the little boy as to why he had told a lie. At first, the little boy refused to admit it, but afterwards when the magistrate threatened to hit him with a large wooden stick, he finally cried it out loud. It turns out their parents, who lived near the river bank, have been using this trick for a long time.

He and his sister are good at swimming, frequently they would pretend to fall into the water to trick people into saving them, and when people saved them, they would accuse them of pushing them into the water. The Jia couple took advantage of this opportunity to get money from them. Typically, people who saved them would just pay money to settle it privately, because most people believed that children couldn't tell lies, and won't used this type of absurd trick.

I was on the side listening to this, stunned. I never thought there would be this kind of parents using this trick.

Pei Zhao said: "Now, the truth has been revealed. My subordinates innocently saved someone, but unexpectedly was blamed. Magistrate, please judge clearly as I will bring the two people back."

The magistrate had a look of shame, raised his hand: "General Pei, please do as you wish."

I refused: " I also have something to say. "

Pei Zhao looked at me, I moved one step forward, facing the magistrate: "You just said people are selfish, they treasure their life, I don't know him and can't swim, if it is not guilt then it is what? This statement is absolutely wrong! I risked my own life to save him because he is younger than me. I thought he lost his balance and slipped into the water, so I didn't think much. Cherishing a child, saving them from danger, this is called being righteous. You cherish life, but I don't know if there would be anyone who would act without thinking and save someone from danger. Before, you muddled through the case and sentenced me to pay back money, wouldn't this make people regret doing good things and be afraid of doing good things? I wouldn't dare to say I did it in case it causes a bigger issue, but to dare say, I have a clear conscience. I want to tell you, although I met a swindler this time, next time if I encounter this situation again, I would still save the person first!"

When I turned around to leave, the surrounding people unexpectedly clapped their hands, also some people looked at me and shouted 'good.'

My face was filled with smile, joyfully looking at the person who shouted out 'good', raised my hand as a sign of respect.

Pei Zhao looked back at me, I just stuck out my tongue, continued to follow along.



Originally, he came by riding a horse. When I looked at the spirited horse, can't help but feel energized: "General Pei, let me ride on this horse for a moment."

Coming out from the court, Pei Zhao politely said: "Gong Zi [1], this horse's temper is not good, I was unable to get a good horse for you to ride on....."

Without waiting for him to finish talking, I already turned around and sat on the horse. The horse's ears lowered, it seemed completely harmless. Pei Zhao was slightly startled, said: "Gong Zi good move, this horse's temper is extremely fierce, most people are unable to deal with, and it doesn't like to be close to other people. This seemed unexpected."

"This horse must be from Western Liang." I patted the horse's neck and its long mane [2], said: "At Western Liang, I have a 7 year old little red horse."

Pei Zhao ordered someone to get two horses, one for A'Du, one for himself. When I saw him turned around and sat on the horse, I couldn't help but be amazed. Our Western Liang men pay particular attention to the skills of riding a horse. The moment I saw Pei Zhao riding the horse, I knew he had good skills.

Because there were a lot of people on the street, the horses couldn't run, only could slowly pull the rein[3] when going forward. The Capital had a clear and refreshing autumn weather, streets were busy, people would come and go. Pei Zhao was originally following us from behind, but because my horse was too nice to me, it wouldn't go faster. A moment after, we were side by side while traveling.

I sighed and said: "Today, I discovered a new world, never have I thought there would be such parents, and using this type of trick."

Pei Zhao smiled: "People's hearts are vicious, Gong Zi should be more careful."

"I am unable to be careful." I said, "There are too many people with different minds in the Capital. We, Western Liang ladies have the same temper, happy or unhappy are all shown on our faces. If you want me to be like the people in the Capital, then just take my life."

Pei Zhao smiled again.

I thought I must have said something wrong, so I quickly said something to make up for it: "General Pei, you are different from other people, you are a good person, I could see through it."

"Gong Zi, you over-praised me."

At this moment a gust of wind blew over, my clothes were originally all wet, but before, we stayed at the court for half a day, so now my clothes are half dry. My undergarment was still wet, when the wind blew over, the coldness could be felt even from the heart, I couldn't help but sneeze.

Pei Zhao said: "There's an inn in the front, if Gong Zi doesn't mind, how about I help you buy some clothes and let you change into them and then go? You'll fall ill if you wear wet clothes in this type of weather."

I remembered A'Du was still wearing wet clothes, so I agreed.

Pei Zhao brought us to an inn, and got one room. After a while, he personally brought two bags of clothes to us, said: "The people I brought here have left, I told them to leave in order to avoid anyone knowing our movement. Two of you, please do as wish. I would be outside the door, if you need anything, just let me know."

He closed the door and A'Du locked the door. I opened the bag of clothes. It included socks, shoes, undergarment and clothes. They were all new, neat and tidy. After we wore the dry clothes, A'Du help me fixed my hair. This time I felt

very refreshed.

I opened the door, called out: "General Pei."

Outside the door was suppose to be a hallway, Pei Zhao was standing there. We didn't see each other for a moment and he had already changed into ordinary clothes with his hair tied up, looking like a scholar. He was looking outside the window, looking at the street. When he heard me call him, he turned around, seemingly in a daze, looked at A'Du and I.

I don't know what he was thinking because his gaze was a little strange. However, his gaze quickly moved away, his face facing down, "I should escort Gong Zi back."

"I sneaked out with great difficulty, I don't want to go back now!" I leaned near the window, seeing the streets crowded and busy, "We should go drink wine, I know a place with shao dao zi[4], while drinking it, it'll make you happy!"

"I still have duties, Gong Zi please excuse me, Gong Zi should also return."

"Today, you don't have any duties. Therefore, today you're not a high ranked general and I am not whatever princess as well. Furthermore, I have too much bad luck today, almost drowned to death, almost wrongly accused by that silly magistrate. If I don't drink some wine to calm down, then it would feel wrong."

Pei Zhao said: "For the purpose of your safety, I should escort you back."

I was very angry, leaning by the window, but I was too lazy to care about him. At this moment, my stomach started to make rumbling noises. I just remembered that I didn't eat lunch, this made me hungry to the point where my chest was stuck to my back. Pei Zhao must have heard my stomach rumble because his face was red. Originally he was standing at a distance away from me, but the window reflected a beam of light at his face, so I could see it very clearly.

I have never seen a grown man's face turn red, can't help but think it was very amusing, laughed and said: "General Pei, could you come with me to eat something?."

Pei Zhao muttered: " Yes."

I don't like his tone of speaking, treating me as if I was an outsider. Perhaps he saved me two times, so I am thankful for him.

A' Du and I led him through a narrow and curved alley, finally arrived at Mi Luo's wine shop.

Once Mi Luo saw me, she approached me affectionately, the hairpins on her head made a loud noise, the accessories on her leg made rustle noises. Mi Luo hugged me, joked: "I'll give you two jars of good wine."

Note:

[1] 公子 Gong Zi-a son of an official, or just a polite way to call a young man

[2] 鬃毛 Mane-the long hair on the neck of a horse

[3] 缰绳 rein-long strap used to guide a horse by pulling it

[4] 烧刀子 shao dao zi - brand name of a wine

# Chapter 7

## 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 7

The updates are going to be slower because my school break just ended, so I won't have much time to translate. I'll try my best to update it whenever I have some free time.

She saw the person behind A'Du, Pei Zhao. She couldn't help, but to stare at him. When other people see Mi Luo's pair of clear eyes, they would be astonished, but Pei Zhao seems to not be affected by it. After, I thought Pei Zhao's family was from the Capital, so they have experienced a lot of situations before. The Capital was busy, filled with women selling wine on the streets, Pei Zhao of course would keep a straight face even in this type of situation.

This wine shop had good wine, the beef was also good too. Mi Luo ordered someone to cut some beef to give to us. When we sat down, it started to rain all of a sudden.

Autumn rains are often lingering, creating sounds when hitting on the bamboo roof tiles. The customers that were sitting near us were merchants from Persia. At this moment, they took out a flute and started playing with it. The melody was very odd but amusing. This sound paired with the sound of the rain had some kind of unspoken charm.

Mi Luo heard the flute sound, placed the wine jar down, jumped onto the table, danced barefooted. Her figure was very soft and alluring, the music was also very charming. The bells in her hands sounded like the rain, paired with the flute sound, it was like a golden snake dance. The surrounding people clapped their hands and shouted out 'good,' Mi Luo jumped down in front of the table, danced around the three of us.

Ever since I have left Western Liang, I have never smiled recklessly before. Mi



Luo's movements were very clear and soft, took out a ribbon and spun it around my body, like a butterfly flying here and there. I did the same thing as her, following the music, doing all kinds of hand gestures, but not as quick and skillful as her. Mi Luo twirled a few times. A'Du passed a guan [1] to me, I got excited so I played the guan while following the music.

When the Persian merchants saw me playing the guan, they also played the flute. I played the guan for a short moment. I could smell the bowl of beef in front of me, so I passed the guan to Pei Zhao: "You play it! You play it!" Afterwards, I used my chopsticks to pick up the pieces of beef.

I never thought that Pei Zhao was able to play the guan, and even be good at it. The guan had a sound of sadness, the sound of the flute was very intense, these two types of instruments matched very well. At first, Pei Zhao played the guan then the flute, but afterwards the Persian merchants played the flute and Pei Zhao played the guan. The melody was sad and then it changed to intense. The melody was as if we were outside of the Yumen gate [2] in the desert, from a distance we could faintly hear the bells on the camels, a group of camels appearing on the desert hill. The sound of the bells on the camels gradually became closer and all of a sudden the gate opened, a large group of camels approached displaying massive power. The sound of footsteps, the sound of the wind, the countless sounds mixed together were like an orchestra. The sounds covered the whole area, Mi Luo was dancing really fast, flying like a golden swan, looking at her made me feel dizzy.

The music sounded extremely sad, like a male eagle flying in the sky, looking down at the desert, flying higher and higher, a big gust of wind swirled the dust and sand from the ground..... When I had finished eating, the eagle had flew to the highest snow mountain, the snow lotus herbs on the snow mountain had blossomed. The eagle had spread out his wings and flew passed, one piece of feather from the eagle had fell off, slowly falling, being blown away by the wind, it kept falling until it was in front of the snow lotus herbs into the snow. The wind had swept up the scattered snow and the piece of feather. The wind slightly shook the flower petals on the snow lotus herbs. The wind finally stopped at the

summit.....The sound of the guan and flute had come to an end spontaneously. The wine shop became so quiet that even the sound of water dripping outside could be heard clearly. Mi Luo was lying down on the table, couldn't help but to breathe deeply, her pair of clear eyes were about to drip water, said: "I cannot do this anymore."The Persian merchants laughed. Someone poured a cup of wine and gave it to Mi Luo. Using one breath, Mi Luo drank the cup of wine with an empty stomach. Mi Luo looked at Pei Zhao and smiled: "You played it well!"

Pei Zhao did not answer, he used the wine to clean the guan and then passed it to me.

I said: "I couldn't tell that you could play the guan. In the Capital, there aren't many people that could play the guan."

Pei Zhao answered: "My Father once went to the Western Regions and brought a lot of musical instruments with one of them being the guan. Ever since childhood when I have some free time, I would teach myself to play the guan."

I clapped my hands while smiling, said: "I know. Your father was the brave general, Pei Kuang. My Father have fought with him before. He was truly a person that could lead an army."

Pei Zhao said: "The Khan was overpraising."

I said: "My Father doesn't randomly praise people. He praised your Father because he was really capable of fighting in a battle."

Pei Zhao said: "Yes."

The moment he said 'Yes,' I felt it wasn't fun anymore. Fortunately, the Persian merchants were singing a song, the melody was very sad, very touching. Mi Luo drank another cup of wine, knew that we didn't understand, so she softly sang it in our language for us to hear. As it turns out, the Persian merchants were singing: "The moon was bright, away from our hometown, the moon was round but also not round, the hometown had disappeared. The stars were shining

brightly, away from our hometown, the universe was glittering brightly, difficult to return to our hometown. The wind was blowing gently, blowing at our hometown, the sun was shining brightly, towards our hometown. Bury me in the mountains, bury me where....."

Listening to Mi Luo sing a few phrases, I couldn't help but feel sad. Listening to the Persian merchants sing sorrowfully, I unconsciously drank one cup of wine. Pei Zhao nodded his head slightly, said: "The feeling of homesick, everyone would experience it. These Persian merchants misses their hometown, but why don't they return home?"

I sighed: "Not everyone are like you. Ever since birth, you have never been away from your hometown. They have no choice, but to be forced to leave their hometown."

Pei Zhao remained silent for a moment, saw that I was about to drink another cup of wine, couldn't help but said: "Gong Zi drank too much."

I impassionately said: "How can I solve my own concerns? Only Du Kang [3]!"

Seeing Pei Zhao looking at me in an astonished way, I stuck out three fingers, said: "I am very capable, when I recite a poem, I would recite three verses of a poem. This was only one of the verses."

.....

This time, the Empress called Li Cheng Yin and I.

I haven't seen Li Cheng Yin for a few days, he seemed to have grown a bit taller. Because he had to enter the palace, he was wearing a crown with fine jades, paired with golden accessories and wearing his frequent clothes. He didn't look at me once, only got into the palanquin.

When I saw the Empress, I knew what was going on. As it turns out, Xu Niang

suddenly suffered from a stomach pain. The imperial doctor discovered that the food had something that induce labor. The Empress then ordered all the servants that have served Xu Niang to be detained. Afterwards, all the food and water were sealed within the palace residence to be examined. At last, they discovered that the rice had drugs in it that caused the unborn child to be killed. The Empress naturally became furious, ordering the servants to be punished. They finally confessed that someone ordered them to do this.

The Empress's voice remained gentle and calm: "I had brought Xu Niang to the palace because I was worried that the mother and the child would encounter some accidents, after all this child was the first child in the Eastern Palace. I have never thought that this would happen in the palace. When I closed my eyes, this type of plotting happened. I have been in the palace for many years, this situation has never happened before!"

Although her tone of speaking was gentle, but the phrases she used, I have never listened to her speak like this. I couldn't help, but even be afraid of breathing. All the people in the palace hall were like me, holding their breath to remain quiet. The Empress said: "Do you know who had bribed the palace maid to do this?"

I looked at Li Cheng Yin. He didn't look at me, just faintly said: "I don't know."

The Empress ordered the female official: "Read the statement for the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess to hear it."

The female official read the palace maid's statement, I felt foolish listening to this, listening to a few more phrases, I couldn't help, but interrupt: "Empress, I didn't do this! I didn't bribe anyone to drug Xu Niang."

The Empress faintly said: "We have a witness and evidence. If you say you didn't do it, then do you have any evidence?"

I will be wrongly accused to death, I said: "Why would I hurt her? I don't know her, I have never seen her before, and I don't even know where she lives in the palace....."

I was simply wrongly accused! I don't know what was going on, but I was already framed like this.

The Empress asked Li Cheng Yin: "Yin Er, what do you think?"

Li Cheng Yin finally glanced at me, and then kneeled down: "Mother should judge it."

The Empress said: "The Crown Princess's identity is different and she is the princess of Western Liang, but thoughtlessly did such a thing. It seems that she will not be suitable to manage the Eastern Palace anymore."

Li Cheng Yin did not say anything.

I was so angry that my whole body was trembling: "I didn't do this, even if you kill me today, I would not admit it! As for the Eastern Palace, to be honest I don't care about it, but I would not allow you to accuse me like this!"

The Empress said: "We have a witness. Yin Er, you say it."

Li Cheng Yin said: "Mother should judge it."

The Empress slightly smiled, said: "Being a married couple for a day is like being in love for a hundred days, you don't care about this affection as a married couple?"

Li Cheng Yin lowered his voice, said: "I couldn't bear to, but country have country rules, family have family rules. I cannot be affected by personal feelings."

The Empress nodded her head, said: "Good, good. Country have country rules, family have family rules, this phrase, good." Her smile slowly vanished, ordered the female official, "Demote Zhao Liang Di to a status of a commoner and expel her from the Eastern Palace!"



I was shocked. Li Cheng Yin's gaze looked like he was struck by lightning:  
"Mother!"

Just now, the statement wasn't false, but when we finished recording the statement, the palace maid committed suicide by biting her own tongue. Her death means that we cannot testify her any further, so I continued to investigate. I discovered that earlier this year, the Zhao family have helped this palace maid. Originally, her death means that only her family would be dragged down, but as I continued to investigate, I discovered that she doesn't have any relatives, only one foster mother. We found that her house has one hundred silver money, which are only for court officials. We captured the foster mother and punished her. She told us that it was Zhao Liang Di who had sent someone to her house. This Zhao Liang Di used a good move, killing two birds with one stone, a good move to shift the blame. Her heart is so cruel, very hateful. If we don't punish her, then she would destroy the whole royal family!"

I don't understand what she was saying, Li Cheng Yin already rushed to say:  
"Mother, please calm down. Someone must have framed Zhao Liang Di. We should order someone to investigate it clearly. Mother please don't be angry, it would cause harm to your body."

It is good when he doesn't say anything, but once he says something, it makes the situation worse.

"You must have fallen into that fox's spell! This Zhao Liang Di cried when Xu Niang was pregnant and now bribed someone to harm Xu Niang! Also, she tried to put the blame on the Crown Princess, she should be put to death!"

Li Cheng Yin repeatedly said: "Mother, please calm down. I know Zhao Liang Di isn't that type of person. Mother, please investigate this clearly."

"Investigate what? What did the child in Xu Niang's stomach block others from doing? She sees the baby as a thorn in the eye, a thorn in her flesh. This type of person in the Eastern Palace is a source of calamity [4] to the country!" The

Empress got more angry as she speaks: "Just now, when we read the palace maid's statement, you did not try to defend the Crown Princess. Now, when the truth has been revealed, you kept on saying that the fox was wrongly accused. Right now you are a Crown Prince, but later you'll become an Emperor, how can you be affected by personal feelings? How can you handle with affairs like this? If I don't kill her, then she'll force you to give up the whole empire in the future!"

Li Cheng Yin's face turned pale, I was still kneeling there, said: "Mother, please calm down. Zhao Liang Di just made a thoughtless mistake, if you ordered her to be killed, I'm afraid that.....I'm afraid that....."I didn't know what to say afterwards, Li Cheng Yin continued on: "Mother, please think clearly. Zhao Liang Di's father works in the imperial court and my Father relies heavily on this minister. Mother, please think clearly."

The Empress coldly laughed: "Just now, you said it yourself! Country have country rules, family have family rules, you cannot be swayed by personal feelings!"

Li Cheng Yin face looked like he was about to die, kept kneeling, and calling out: "Mother."

The Empress said: "Originally, it was supposed to be the Crown Princess that was responsible for the Eastern Palace matters. I have no choice, but to take matters into my own hands. I need to deal with this type of evil person myself." She ordered the female official to pass on the order. I saw that the situation wasn't getting any better, so I wrapped my arms around the Empress's legs: "Mother, could you let me say a few words? Just now, Mother said that I am responsible for the matters of the Eastern Palace, I know that I have never done it well, but Mother please let me say a few words."

The Empress calmed down a little and said: "You say it then."

"The Crown Prince really likes Zhao Liang Di. If Mother orders Zhao Liang Di to be killed, then the Crown Prince wouldn't be happy for the rest of his life." When I

feel anxious, I would talk in a disordered way: "The Crown Prince and I have been a married couple for three years, although I am not favored by the Crown Prince, but I know that the Crown Prince wouldn't be able to live without Zhao Liang Di. If there was no Zhao Liang Di, the Crown Prince would still not like me. Also, there are a lot of things that I can't do, but Zhao Liang Di help me do it on my behalf. The Eastern Palace's account books, I read it and I couldn't understand it, I gave it to Zhao Liang Di and she took care of it. If there was no Zhao Liang Di, then the Eastern Palace wouldn't be this calm....."

I didn't know what to say, turned around and called Yong Niang: "Yong Niang, you say it to the Empress!"

Yong Niang bowed and said, "Yes." She bowed her head, said, "Crown Princess meant that Zhao Liang Di has been serving the Crown Prince for many years, didn't get acknowledged for anything and very hardworking. Also, Zhao Liang Di usually treats people very well, respects the Crown Princess, helps the Crown Princess manage the Eastern Palace. Empress, please consider this as just a thoughtless mistake and deal with this leniently."

The Empress slowly said: "This Zhao Liang Di, you cannot keep, if you keep her, the Eastern Palace would be a disaster. Back then when we were at the Crown Princess's coronation ceremony, the Emperor had praised the Crown Princess for being a beautiful woman and we were lucky to have her in our royal family. Unfortunately, you two have been already married for three years and still don't have a child and there's also Xu Niang's matters. This makes me feel distressed."

Li Cheng Yin was looking at the ground, said: "I am an unfilial son."

The Empress said: "If you still have some respect for me, then you should spend more time with the Crown Princess and distance yourself from that fox."

Li Cheng Yin lowered his voice, said: "Yes."

Whenever I wanted to say something, Yong Niang would pull the corner of my

clothes from behind, hinting at me to not say anything. The corner of Li Cheng Yin's mouth slightly moved, but he also didn't say anything.

The Empress said: "You may rise."

Li Cheng Yin was still kneeling there, not moving. I have no choice, but to not stand up as well.

The Empress did not look at him, just said: "You don't need to feel too bad about Xu Niang's matters, after all you are still young."

Li Cheng Yin didn't say anything. I thought he wouldn't feel bad, if he really did feel bad, then it would be because of Zhao Liang Di.

The Empress again said: "Xu Niang is also very pitiful, bestow her with a title as a Bao Lin."

Li Cheng Yin seemed disheartened: "I'm unwilling.....I'm still young, Eastern Palace have a lot of concubines, I think it is inappropriate."

I knew he had promised Zhao Liang Di that he would not have another concubine, that's why he would speak like that. As expected, the Empress was angry again, said: "You will become an Emperor in the future, why don't you understand this matter?"

The Empress looked at me and said, "Crown Princess rise first, go visit Xu Niang and comfort her on my behalf."

I was still foolish, even though I knew she was trying to make me leave in order to lecture Li Cheng Yin, I still stood up, bowed to her, and left.

Notes:

[1] 箎簞 Guan -a double reed bamboo pipe

[2] 玉门关 Yumen Gate- western frontier post on the Silk Road [3] 杜康 Du

Kang-a historical figure who was the inventor of wine

[4] 祸水 source of calamity-source of misfortune or disaster



## Chapter 8

### 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 8

With a face filled with smile, I have arrived at Xu Niang's palace residence, the lonely palace park. This was the first time seeing Xu Niang, she was lying on the bed, a face filled with sickness, but I could tell that she was a beautiful woman. At this moment, her palace maid said: "The Crown Princess has arrived." She wanted to get up, Yong Niang had rushed over to help her.

I didn't know how to comfort her, I just repeated what the Empress had said: "You don't have to feel too bad, you are still young."

Xu Niang had shed some tears, said: "Thank you Crown Princess. I have brought great misfortune, I should have died."

I embarrassingly said: "Actually.....why do you want to die? Look at me, I'm doing well....."

Once I heard Yong Niang coughed, I knew I had said something wrong again. I asked: "What do you want to eat? I could teach someone to make it and give it to you." Last time when I was sick, the Empress had sent someone to look after me, and asked what I wanted to eat, or if there was anything lacking. What does the Eastern Palace not have? This was what they had said to comfort me. I don't know how to comfort a sick person, I could only repeat whatever the Empress had said.

Xu Niang said: "Thank you Crown Princess."

I looked at her appearance. She looked very sad as if every hope had turned into dust. In the end, Yong Niang stepped forward to say a lot of words to comfort her. She kept on crying. In the end when we had left, she was still there crying.

When we arrived at the Central Palace, the Empress had already ordered someone to write Xu Niang as Bao Lin in the imperial order book. Li Cheng Yin's complexion was hard to look at. The Empress said: "The Eastern Palace should be harmonious. The Crown Princess is still immature, there are a lot of things she couldn't take care of. If more people help her, then it would be good." She saw me coming in when she raised her head. She waved her hand, I went over to bow to her, she did not order the female official to help me up, but instead she helped me get up. I was simply overwhelmed by favor from the Empress. Every time, the Empress seems very composed, so it was rare to see her treat me like this.

"This Zhao Liang Di, death punishment could be exempted, but she cannot be freed from other punishments." The Empress had faintly said, "We'll demote her to a status of a commoner, and we'll imprison her for three months. Crown prince, you cannot visit her or else I'll expel her from the Eastern Palace."

I saw that the corners of Li Cheng Yin's eyes have twitched, but he lowered his head, depressingly said: "Yes."

When we had left the Central Palace, Li Cheng Yin slapped me. I wasn't able to guard myself because it happened so suddenly. That slap made me feel foolish.

A'Du took out her knife, "shua" the sharp knife was already placed at his neck. Yong Niang was scared and screamed: "You can't!" I didn't let her finish talking, I had already slapped him hard. Even though I am not good at martial arts, but it's not good to irritate me. Since he slapped me like that, of course I'll slap him back!

Li Cheng Yin coldly laughed: "Today, you should have killed me instead!" He pointed at me, "You vicious woman, I know it was you! You created this trap to get rid of the child in Xu Niang's stomach, and you blamed it on Zhao Liang Di."

I was so angry that my whole body was trembling, said: "Why did you say it like that?"

"This whole time you were pretending to be very pitiful and innocent in front of everyone. You're pretending to not understand! You complained that I treated you coldly. You are jealous of Zhao Liang Di, so you would use this type of evil plan to harm her. You are more poisonous than even a poisonous snake! You must be satisfied, being able to get rid of Zhao Liang Di, breaking us apart! If anything happens to Zhao Liang Di, I would not let you get away with this. I'm telling you right now, once I become the Emperor, I will immediately depose you!"

He made me so angry that I almost fainted. I pushed A'Du away and stood in front of Li Cheng Yin: "You should just depose me right now instead. You think I like being married to you? You think I want to be a Crown Princess? There are a lot of men in Western Liang, every one of them are heroes, not like you who's useless! What else do you know besides reciting poems? Your archery accuracy is worst than me! Your horseback riding skills are also worst than me! If you were in Western Liang, your type of men wouldn't be able to marry a wife. Who would cherish you?"

Li Cheng Yin was so angry that he left abruptly.

My heart was in a daze. We have been arguing for three years, I know he doesn't like me, but I never knew that he would hate me this much. He shouldn't have speculated that I have evil intentions. Yong Niang helped me get into the palanquin. She lowered her voice and said a few words to comfort me: "The Crown Prince was expressing his anger at Crown Princess because of Zhao Liang Di, Crown Princess shouldn't put this at heart."

I know, of course I know that it was because Zhao Liang Di has suffered from injustice, so he would express all his anger at me, but I didn't do anything, why would he express his anger at me?

He said I was jealous of Zhao Liang Di. I am a little bit jealous of her because there was someone who treats her so well that they would believe her in any

situation, protect her and care for her. Other than those reasons, I have no other reason to be jealous of her. Also, I have never thought of hurting her.

Zhao Liang Di seemed like a polite person. Last time when she played cards with me, I thought that she was a very smart woman, why would she do such a cruel thing? Also, I don't think the Empress used a good method to take care of this situation. Xu Niang seemed like a weak person. Even though she was bestowed with a title of a Bao Lin, Li Cheng Yin doesn't like her. Eastern Palace would have another pitiful person.

At night time, I couldn't sleep because I was thinking about this situation. I bluntly asked A'Du: "Do you think Zhao Liang Di is a bad person?"

A'Du nodded her head and shook her head.

"I don't understand what the women in Central Plain are thinking. The men in Western Liang, although they could marry several wives, if they don't get along with each other, they could remarry other people."

A'Du nodded her head.

"Also, what is so good about Li Cheng Yin? Although his appearance is passable, his temper is bad and he's narrow-minded....." I lay down on the bed, "If I had a choice, I would not marry him."

What I said was the truth, if I had a choice, I would not allow myself to fall into this pitiful situation. He already has someone that he likes. I have no choice, but to marry him. As a result, it caused him to hate me. These moments were very difficult to go through. Now that Zhao Liang Di was kept in prison, Li Cheng Yin hates me even more. I don't want a husband that hates me.

If I had a choice, I would marry an ordinary Western Liang man. At least he would sincerely love me, ride the horse with me, go hunting with me, play the guan for me to hear, and then I would give birth to a pile of babies, a family

spending time happily every day.....However, these types of days will only happen in my dreams.

All of a sudden A'Du pulled my hand, pointed at the window.

I was completely astonished. I pulled open the window and on the opposite side, there was a person sitting on the roof tiles of the palace hall.

This person was wearing white clothes, sitting on the black roof tiles made him very noticeable.

I recognized the person, it was Gu Jian again!

I wasn't sure if I should shout "There's an assassin." All of a sudden, he looked like a big bird flying from the roof to the front of my window.

I glared at him: "What are you going to do?"

He didn't answer me, but only stared at my face. I know my face was still swollen. When I had returned to the Eastern Palace, Yong Niang had brought a boiled egg and rolled it on my face for half a day, but my cheek still had red fingerprints and it wouldn't disappear. However, I wasn't at a disadvantage because I had also slapped his face swollen. Before, I had used my whole strength to slap him, so my hand was numb.

Repressing his emotions, he faintly said: "Who slapped you?"

I touched my cheek, said: "I'm fine, I already slapped back."

He continued to ask: "Who?"

I asked: "Why are you asking?"

His face didn't show any expression: "To kill that person."

I got scared. He continued on to ask: "You are the Crown Princess, who would dare to slap you? Emperor? Empress? Or someone else?"

I shook my head, said: "Don't ask, I'm not going to tell you."

He continued to ask: "Do you want to leave with me?"

This person was so weird, I shook my head. I was about to close the window, but he reached his hands out to block me from closing the window and asked: "Are you angry at me?"

I was confused: "Why would I be angry at you?"

"The situation three years ago, are you not angry about it?"

I seriously told him: "I really don't know you. You shouldn't come here at night ever again. This is the Eastern Palace, if someone discovers you, they would think you're an assassin and they would shoot arrows to kill you."

He suddenly laughed: "Eastern Palace? This is the Imperial Palace, I could come or go whenever I want, who would be able to kill me?"

I glared at him, this person was too crazy, but his martial arts skills, even in the Imperial Palace, he really could come or go whenever he wants. I sighed: "What are you going to do?"

"I came here to look at you." He asked again, "Can you leave with me?"

I shook my head.

He became very angry, suddenly grabbing onto my hand: "You won't be happy if you stay here, why aren't you willing to leave with me?"



"Who said I am not happy here? Who are you to judge whether I am happy or not?"

He reached out his hand to pull me, I shouted: "Let go!" A'Du was trying to reach to us, jumping from side to side. He gently waved his sleeves, not waiting for A'Du to reach us, he pulled me out of the window and lifted me away. His martial arts skills were good, lifting me along with the wind, I could feel the wind constantly passing through my ears. Not a moment after, we have reached to the highest place of the Eastern Palace where you could see everything. The whole palace was very quiet at night. At the rooftop, it was very cold and slippery.

I pushed his hand away, but I almost slipped. I glared at him: "What are you going to do?"

He pointed at the palace that was under my feet, said: "Xiao Feng, look over here. This palace have tall walls, surrounding you at all sides, a place that's all dark and no daylight, how could this place hold onto you?"

I don't like it when he calls out my name, it gives me an uncomfortable feeling, I said: "This is none of your concern."

He said: "What should I do for you to leave with me?"

I glared at him and rolled my eyes: "I will not leave with you. Even if you have high martial arts skills, if I shout and the Yu Lin army hears it, they'll shoot arrows at you until you look like a hedgehog."

He faintly smiled, said: "You forgot who I am? Go call out all the Yu Lin army, you think it will affect me?"

I forgot that this person was very crazy. I suddenly thought of an idea. I decided to try to praise him: "Your martial arts skills are so high, can no one in this world beat it? Have you never lost to anyone?"

He suddenly laughed, said: "You don't remember anything? Three years ago, we have fought and I had lost to you."

I was so shocked that my chin had dropped. I pointed at my nose: "You? Lost to me?" That phrase was too shocking. I don't even have any martial arts skills, he only needs to use his fingertips to be able to turn me around. How can he had lost to me if we have fought? I can't even hold a sword properly.

"Yes." He was very calm and composed, "We had a bet. If I had lost to you in the fight, I would become your husband, loving you and protecting you for the rest of my life."

My mouth was wide open that even a whole egg could fit, asked: "What if I had lost the fight?"

"If you had lost, then you will have to marry me, take care of me and love me for the rest of your life."

I trembled, this is not how you play with people.

He said: "I wasn't easy on you, but you were able to snatch my sword away, so I had lost to you."

I was able to snatch your sword away? I will never believe it!

I quickly reacted: "It doesn't matter who had lost, I don't even remember anything and I don't even know you. You saying it with your own mouth, I would not believe it."

He faintly smiled, took out a pair of jade pendants from his sleeve, said: "When we had agreed to marry each other, we would divide the pair of pendants into half, you have one pendant and I have one pendant. We had agreed to meet each other at the Yumen gate on the sixth month of the fifteenth day when the

moon was full, so that I could bring you back to my home."

# Chapter 9

## 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 9

I made a mistake on the previous post. It was suppose to be jade pendant not jade bracelet.

I looked at the jade pendants in his hand. Western Liang have a lot of foreign merchants and the place that makes jades weren't far away, so I have seen a lot of jade jewelries. Ever since I came to the Capital, the Eastern Palace have all kinds of jewelries, so I have seen all kinds of jade jewelries before, but I have never seen a jade pendant that was this beautiful. This white jade was very smooth, under the moon, it would shine very brightly.

"This jade pendant I have never seen before." I was very curious, "You said we had agreed to leave together, but how come we didn't leave together?"

He slowly lowered his hand, said in a low voice: "I'm sorry. That day I all of a sudden had an important matter, so I couldn't wait for you at the Yumen gate. When I have arrived at the Yumen gate, three days and three nights have already passed. When I have arrived, I saw your jade pendant in the sand, but you were already gone....." I looked at him, he doesn't seem like he was lying when he said he wasn't able to go to the Yumen gate on that day. His expression was filled with regret and disappointment as if there was an unspoken feeling of regret.

I felt that his story was uninteresting: "Even if you have anything good to say, the story would be meaningless, since you were the one who couldn't come that day. I don't know you, so you must have recognized the wrong person." I turned around to look at the color of the sky: "I need to sleep now. Also, you shouldn't come here anymore. If someone sees you, it would be very troublesome. I already have enough problems to handle." He stared at my face for a while, asked: "Xiao Feng, are you still blaming it on me?" "I don't have the effort to blame it on you! I really don't know you." He didn't create any sound for a while.

In the end, he let out a long sigh, took out an arrowhead, said: "If you encounter any dangerous situation, shoot the arrowhead in the air, I will come and save you." I have A'Du by my side, what dangerous situation would I encounter? I didn't want the arrowhead, but he forced me to accept it. He gently lifted me up, but before I was able to shout, we were already on the ground. When he was sending me back to the palace residence, not waiting for me to turn around, he had already returned to the top of the roof tiles, without a sound, staring at me at a distance. He turned his head around and finally left.

I closed the window. I handed the arrowhead to A'Du and faced towards her: "This Gu Jian, although he has exceptional martial art skills, he always seems like a mysterious person. He says that I know him, but if I know him, then how come I don't recognize him at all?" A'Du stared at me, her gaze was filled with gentleness and pity. I don't understand why she gave me that type of gaze. I sighed and went to bed. A'Du couldn't speak, so how could she tell me? This Gu Jian, what type of person is he?

I couldn't sleep properly because there were a lot of things that had happened tonight. I had a messy dream, inside the dream there was a person playing the guan, I wanted to approach him, but there was a thick fog everywhere, so I couldn't see his face. He was standing there, not too close, but not too far. My heart understands that I could not approach him. I hesitated within the fog, finally I was able to find him. I was so happy to see him that I ran towards him, but I slipped and fell into a bottomless pit.

When I was in despair, suddenly someone caught me in midair, the sound of the wind went through my ears. He was holding onto me, slowly falling downwards.....he saved me, holding onto me in midair spinning.....spinning.....slowly spinning.....The sky was filled with stars as if they were raindrops falling down.....Between heaven and earth, it was only him staring at me with his pair of eyes.....His eyes only had me.....I wanted to faint. It was that person who was holding onto me.....I know he loved me deeply. When he was around, I felt relieved.

When I woke up, it was already daytime. I had this dream numerous times before, but every time when I woke up, I would feel disappointed because I couldn't see his face clearly. Every time I had this dream, I would use all my effort to see his face clearly, but every time I wasn't successful, this time was no exception. I turned around and noticed that there was a flower on my pillow, refreshing and dewy.

I was surprised, A'Du was sleeping in front of the window, almost no one can avoid her eyes and ears except for that Gu Jian. I quickly opened the windows. I saw the shadow of a person wearing white clothes, but Gu Jian quickly disappeared.

I placed the flower inside the flower vase. My mood was a bit better, but my good mood didn't last long because Yong Niang quickly told me that yesterday Li Cheng Yin drank wine the whole night and is really drunk, creating chaos.

I can't look at this type of man. If I was him, I would have sneak out to see Zhao Liang Di, since she was still alive and I would think of ways for the two of us to be together. As long as the green mountains are there, one needs to not worry about firewood [1].

I told Yong Niang that we don't need to take care of Li Cheng Yin and letting him be drunk to death would be good.

Although I had said it like that, but Li Cheng Yin has been drinking wine continuously for three days, every day he would drink until he's in a drunk state. On the fourth day, he finally fell ill.

When he was always drunk, he would kick out all the palace maids and not allow them to enter into his palace residence. After he was drunk, he got a cold, a sore throat and then a fever. The place I live was half of the palace away from his place, so the information that I get were not fast and abundant. When I know about this situation, he was already very sick, since the whole palace doesn't know about the situation until now. "The Crown Prince doesn't want to take the



medicine and he doesn't want the whole palace to know about this situation." Yong Niang lowered her voice: "Because of Zhao Liang Di's situation, he is still angry at the Empress." I felt that this was foolish and funny: "Is torturing himself a way of taking revenge for Zhao Liang Di?" Yong Niang said: "The Crown Prince is naturally kindhearted and have received a lot of love from the Emperor and the Empress, can't help but....." She didn't say anything bad about Li Cheng Yin, only spoken up to here. She continued to talk, but then stopped.

I decided to go see Li Cheng Yin to see if he was really sick. Even if he dies from illness, it doesn't matter, but I don't want to be a widow.

Li Cheng Yin must have been very sick because when I went to his bedside, he didn't get angry. He must have forgotten that whenever I go into his palace residence, he would treat me like a rat and kick me out. The palace maid helped me open the bed net. I saw that Li Cheng Yin's face was as red as a cooked crab. Speaking of eating crabs, before coming to the Capital, I have never eaten crabs before. On the first year of the Double Ninth Festival [2], the palace had a grand banquet with one of the dishes being the steamed crab. I looked at the red crab, but I didn't know how to eat it. Li Cheng Yin would be harsh on me for this matter and whenever this matter was mentioned, he would always say that I was a Western Liang woman who have never seen crabs before.

I touched Li Cheng Yin's forehead, it was boiling hot.

I yelled out a few times: "Li Cheng Yin!" He didn't respond to me.

It looks like he had lost his consciousness, gasping for air and even the white skin on his lips had broken into pieces.

I wanted to pull my hand away, but suddenly he grabbed onto my hand. His hand was boiling hot like a piece of heated iron. His breath rushed, but his vague voice could still be heard: "Niang....Niang..." I have never heard him call the Empress "Niang." The Empress was after all an Empress and he was the successor to the throne, so the two of them would speak in a polite way. The Empress treated

him the same as me, besides "rise," "sit," "go," she would say a lengthy speech to lecture him.

I felt that Li Cheng Yin was very pitiful.

Being a Crown Princess was very frustrating, this cannot do, that cannot do. Every year there were numerous ceremonies in the palace, having to wear ceremonial clothes and the phoenix crown would always make my waist sore and my back hurt. The Empress has taken care of me, saying that I was young and having to come from Western Liang to the Capital to get married, so she wouldn't criticize me harshly. Compared to being a Crown Princess, being a Crown Prince was one thousand, one million times more frustrating. If I had to read those books, I would get a headache. Li Cheng Yin had to be able to memorize those books, recite poems, draw, have good archery and horseback riding skills. His childhood must have been unhappy, having to learn so many things must have been very frustrating.

I couldn't pull my hand away, Li Cheng Yin was grasping onto my hand very tightly. At this moment, the palace maid brought the medicine. Yong Niang handed over the medicine, said in a low voice: "Crown Princess, the medicine is here." I called out: "Li Cheng Yin! Get up and drink the medicine!" Li Cheng Yin didn't answer me, but only continued to grasp onto my hand. Yong Niang ordered the palace maids to place a few pillows on the bedside and help Li Cheng Yin get up. He was half leaning and half sitting there. Yong Niang fed him medicine with a jade spoon, but he didn't open his mouth. We could only place half of the spoon in the corner of his mouth and let the medicine flow into his mouth.

I couldn't bear this anymore, said: "I'll do it." Li Cheng Yin was still holding onto my right hand, so I could only hold the bowl of medicine with my left hand. I turned my head around to call A'Du: "Pinch his nose." A'Du moved towards Li Cheng Yin and pinched his nose, so that no air would come out. After a while, he finally opened his mouth, so I poured the bowl of medicine into his mouth. With his nose pinched, he could only drink the medicine, but because he drank it very

quickly, he coughed a few times. His eyes opened: "Hot.....very hot....." Being burned to death was better than being sick to death.

I hinted at A'Du to let go. Li Cheng Yin was still holding onto my hand, but he wasn't looking at me. He closed his eyes and slowly fell asleep.

Yong Niang helped me get a wooden stool, so that I could sit close to the window. I sat there for a while, but I felt very uncomfortable. Li Cheng Yin was still holding onto my hand, so my arm was numb. I tried to pull my hand away, but once I moved, Li Cheng Yin would hold onto my hand tighter. A'Du "shua" took out her knife and placed the knife onto Li Cheng Yin's wrist. I shook my head, hinting at her to not do that. If A'Du hurts him, then the Emperor would send the army to attack Western Liang.

I'm starting to miss Zhao Liang Di. At least if she was here, then I don't have to take care of Li Cheng Yin and even if he was this sick, he wouldn't be holding onto my hand and not letting go.

One shichen [3] has passed, my arm was already numb as if it was senseless. I started to think of ways to help Zhao Liang Di get out of prison, so that she could do this hard task instead.

After two shichen, half of my body was already numb as if it was senseless. I couldn't bear this anymore, so I quietly called Yong Niang. She walked towards me and lowered her head to listen to my command. I quickly told her: "Yong Niang.....I need to relieve myself....." Yong Niang quickly said: "I will order someone to bring the chamber pot [4]." She quickly walked out, I couldn't even call her. She ordered the palace maids to bring in the folding screens, told them to stand outside the palace residence, and then she locked the doors. I wrinkled my face showing pain: "Yong Niang.....but I can't....." "I'm here to serve Crown Princess....." I want to cry: "I can't! I can't do it here! Li Cheng Yin is right here....." "The Crown Prince is not a stranger.....The Crown Prince is already asleep." Yong Niang comforted me, said: "Also, Crown Prince and Crown Princess are a married couple. As a married couple, you have the same heart and the

same body....." I didn't want to listen to her lengthy speech. I couldn't bear this anymore, doing this in front of Li Cheng Yin, in front of a man.....I want to cry. I really want to cry..... "Yong Niang, you think of a way.....hurry and think of a way!" Yong Niang thought for a moment, I didn't rush her, but in the end she couldn't think of any other better ways. I couldn't bear this anymore, so I repeatedly said: "Fine, fine, I'll do it here. You come and block me." Yong Niang stood between Li Cheng Yin and I, used her body to block me from Li Cheng Yin, but because Li Cheng Yin was still holding onto my hand, she could only block a small portion of my body. I opened my belt in panic, constantly looking at Li Cheng Yin. A'Du helped me take out the belt and hold onto my dress.

When I recite a poem, I would recite the three verse poem. One of the verses, I have said it in front of Pei Zhao: "How can I solve my own concerns? Only Du Kang." Another verse was: "The rains are loud, the rains are quiet, loud and quiet sounds mixed together, like big and small pearls falling onto a plate." Why would I recite this poem? When I first learned the Central Plains language, it was a poem that was especially hard to recite, so I would recite this poem as a tongue twister. Every year, I would recite this poem.

The rains are loud, the rains are quiet, loud and quiet sounds mixed together, like big and small pearls falling onto a plate....As expected, my whole body feels light, really comfortable.

When I quickly turned around, I felt that I was very smart because I was still able to remember the poem. Li Cheng Yin suddenly moved slightly and then opened his eyes. "Ah!" I screamed.

A'Du jumped up, and "shua" took out her knife. Yong Niang got scared from my scream, but she was pushed away by A'Du. A'Du's golden inlaid knife was already placed at Li Cheng Yin's neck. I was in a confused state, hurriedly fixed my dress while calling A'Du: "No!" A'Du don't move!" I quickly wore my belt, but the Central Plain's clothes would move here and move there and I couldn't wear these clothes properly. Usually, the palace maids would help me put on the clothes. When I quickly wore the belt, I created a tight knot, so I couldn't fix it. I

quickly pulled A'Du: "A'Du! No! He only scared me a little!" A'Du putted the knife away. Li Cheng Yin stared at me, and I stared at him. He appeared to have a lifeless look in his eyes, looking at the folded screens in the back, the dumbstruck Yong Niang, the chamber pot by the window, and then looking at the hand he was holding. Finally, he looked at my waist, all messy with the tight knot. The corner of Li Cheng Yin's mouth suddenly twitched.

Notes:

[1]留得青山在不愁没柴烧 As long as the green mountains are there, one needs to not worry about firewood-The actual meaning of this phrase is that while there's life, there is still hope.

[2]重九 Double Ninth Festival - This festival is on the ninth day of the ninth month. The number nine is regarded as a yang (Chinese spiritual term) number, but this festival is on a day that has too much yang, since the date is a double ninth (ninth day of the ninth month), so this day was considered to be dangerous. ~wikipedia

[3]时辰 Shichen-A day is divided into twelve shichen, so one shichen equals to two hours.

[4]恭桶 Chamber pot-Back in those times, there were no toilets, so they would only sit in a pot to do their thing.

# Chapter 10

## 东宫 Eastern Palace: Chapter 10



Sorry I didn't update for the past few months since I have been busy with my part time job and school, but I'll update more frequently. I also wanted to introduce Nilla, who will be editing the English translations.

Hi guys, nice to meet you all! My nickname comes from the food Nilla Wafers, and I happen to really like vanilla too. Anyways, I hope you enjoy this chapter. I'd like to thank Michelle for giving me the opportunity to work with her. Props to her for taking so much time to translate for us ^^ Some of the descriptions are pretty weird for my English-speaking brain, but they're also pretty hilarious considering the context haha ^^ our heroine is too much fun.

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My reputation is...ruined! Although we've argued so much these last three years, I have never disgraced myself in front of Li Cheng Yin until today. I was very furious and hotly said, "If you dare to laugh, I'll tell A'Du to kill you with the knife!"

The corner of his mouth twitched even more, so I glared at him, but he started to laugh loudly. I'd never seen him laugh so happily before, and the whole palace residence echoed with his laughter. I got very angry and seized A'Du's knife.

Yong Niang called out in shock as I flipped the knife around and used the handle to threaten Li Cheng Yin.

"Do you think I'm scared to hit you? Do you think that if you're sick I won't hit you? I'm telling you, if I wasn't worried that the Emperor would send an army to kill my Father, I would've definitely killed you today!"

Yong Niang moved forward to pull me away, but A'Du blocked her. Even though I was using the knife handle, being hit by it would still be very painful. Li

Cheng Yin endured quite a few of my hits and he seemed completely different, he wasn't even yelling at me like usual. The two of us were fighting on top of the bed, and each hit from the flashing golden knife in my hand was accompanied by the sound of the wind. Yong Niang was panicking, jumping up and down. "Crown Princess, Crown Princess, don't hurt the Crown Prince! Crown Prince, be careful!"

Li Cheng Yin used his strength to seize my knife while I was busily calling A'Du. "Take Yong Niang outside!"

If I didn't force her to leave, then I wouldn't be able to fight him.

A'Du quickly pulled Yong Niang away. My hair became loose, and the golden phoenix hairpin suddenly slipped down to my hair bun. Within a blink of an eye, Li Cheng Yin had seized my knife.

Li Cheng Yin stood up on the bed, holding the knife above me. His body was taller than mine, even when I tiptoed I was still unable to reach the knife. I jumped up to get the knife, but he switched the knife to another hand. I jumped again, and he switched once more...I jumped four to five times, but every time I still couldn't get that knife. He jokingly said, "Jump! Jump again!"

This made me even angrier. Seeing that he was only wearing a yellow silk nightgown with a red belt, I had an idea and abruptly grasped onto his belt. Li Cheng Yin suddenly became flustered and sputtered, "You, what are you doing?"

With one hand grabbing onto the belt, I started kicking his knee. I kicked his knee so hard that he bent and fell down. As he fell, I quickly jumped up to grab his wrist and take back the knife.

At this moment, A'Du came back. Seeing that I was leaning towards Li Cheng Yin's body and pulling onto his belt, A'Du's face suddenly became red and she disappeared in a flash.

"A'Du!" I jumped up to call her, but Li Cheng Yin was trying to take back the knife.

Both of us were fighting on the bed, but we fell to the floor and became entangled. I never thought Li Cheng Yin could fight so well. Before when we fought, it would always end quickly because someone would come and stop us. Today was different than before. Even though he was still sick, a man is always a man, and he was endowed with extraordinary strength like a bull. Although I'm very good at fighting, I'm at a disadvantage sometimes because I can't endure as long as others can. Towards the end of a long fight I become powerless. Li Cheng Yin took back the knife but I grasped onto his hand as if my life depended on it. He loosened his grip, threw the knife to the other side and then kicked it far away so that no one could get to it.

I was gasping for air, Li Cheng Yin was still twisting my arm, and the both of us were like two locks twisted together on the rug. His forehead was full of sweat. This was good, sweating after a long fight would help him recover from his illness. We became deadlocked: he wouldn't let go while I didn't have any more strength to struggle. He saw my knotted belt and used one hand to pull on it.

I nervously asked, "What are you doing?"

He pulled off the knotted belt and carelessly tied my hands together. I became anxious, I was scared that he would tie me up and hit me. I shouted, "Hey! A gentleman does not hold a grudge, if you dare to torture me, then I will call A'Du to come and kill you!"

"Shut up!"

"A'Du!" I shouted, "A'Du come quickly!"

Li Cheng Yin seemed scared A'Du would come over because he knew he couldn't beat her. He turned around to look for something, and I guess he was trying to find something to block my mouth. However, the bed and the floor were a complete mess, the pillow and blankets were scattered on the floor... where could he find something so quickly? Even though my hands were tied together, my feet could still move. I was jumping on the ground like a fish out of the water, and I seized this opportunity to shout, "A'Du! Come quickly and save me! A'Du!"

Li Cheng Yin became anxious, so he threw himself on top of me and used his mouth to stop my mouth.

I was stunned.

His body was filled with the scent of sweat, medicine, and other unknown scents. His mouth was soft and hot like a freshly cooked roasted duck, but his mouth was softer. I was stunned, really stunned. My eyes were opened widely and all I could see were his eyes.

We stared at each other.

I had forgotten how to breathe, and was only staring at him.

I opened my mouth, about to shout, but his arms tightened. When I opened my mouth, his tongue went into my mouth.

Too disgusting!

My whole body was filled with goosebumps and all the hairs on my body stood up. He suddenly nibbled onto my mouth.

Ah, ah, ah! That is my mouth! Not pig feet! Not roasted chicken! Not duck leg! He suddenly hugged me while nibbling onto my mouth with great pleasure. While he was nibbling onto my mouth, he was also touching my clothes. Fortunately, there was a tight knot around my waist or else he would have pulled my skirt apart and I wouldn't be able to live anymore.

How grievous! How insolent!

I used all my effort to bite his mouth, and raised my foot to kick him fiercely.

I kicked him aside and he didn't move anymore. I jumped up, rushed over to pick up A'Du's knife, and then cut off the belt that tied my hands. I picked up the knife and pointed it to his neck: "Li Cheng Yin! Today, I will fight you until the end!"

Li Cheng Yin lazily glanced at me and lowered his head to touch the knife. I pressed the knife closer to his neck to threaten him: "You aren't allowed to tell anyone about today's matter or else I'll tell A'Du to kill you tonight!"

Li Cheng Yin was sitting there with his hands by his waist as if there was no sharp knife near his neck when he suddenly became shameless: "What things

happened today that don't you want me to say?"

"You kissing me, and... and....hmph! Anyways, you cannot tell anyone about today's situation or else I'll kill you!"

He moved his neck closer to the knife: "If you kill me now, you are killing your husband. Also, if you dare to touch a piece of my hair, my imperial father would send troops and fight Western Liang!"

How shameless!

I was so angry that I didn't know what to do. I hesitated whether or not I should stab him or let A'Du deal with him tonight. "But..." he said, "If I am in a good mood, then I won't tell anyone about today's matter."

I looked at him. "What do you want me to do in order for you to be in a good mood?"

Li Cheng Yin tapped his chin. "Let me think...."

I fiercely said, "What is there to think about? Anyways, I'm telling you right now, if you tell anyone about this matter, I will immediately tell A'Du to kill you!"

"Kiss me!"

"What?"

"If you kiss me, then I won't tell anyone!"

I looked at him suspiciously. Today's Li Cheng Yin doesn't seem to be the Li Cheng Yin I had known. Before today we wouldn't have gotten past three sentences of conversation before arguing with one another. Li Cheng Yin was very hateful, hateful, and extra hateful...but today he was shameless, shameless, and especially shameless.

My mind relented and I decided to take the risk. "You will keep your promise?"

"A gentleman will act upon his words."

"Fine."

I placed the knife down, closed my eyes and bit him on his face leaving a tooth mark. It was so painful that he sharply took in a breath. When I finished kissing him, I was about to pick up the knife and leave, but he suddenly reached out and pulled me into his embrace.

Unexpectedly, he nibbled on my mouth again. Ah, ah, ah, ah!

He nibbled for a long time before letting me go. I was gasping for air and my lips were burning hot. This person was nibbling my mouth to the point it became swollen!

He reached out his finger to touch my lips, said: "This is called kissing, do you understand?" I really want to stab him, if I wasn't worried about our two countries fighting, people suffering, the bloodbath, the bones piled as high as a mountain...



I swallowed back my pride and grinned. "Thank you for teaching me!"

"No need to thank me." He was so shameless.

"Now that you know, kiss me."

We just kissed! I was so angry that I jumped up. "You didn't keep your promise!"

"Just now, I was the one kissing you not you kissing me."

For the peace of the two countries, I will endure it!

I grabbed onto the front of his clothes and then imitated him by fiercely nibbling onto his mouth, chicken legs, chicken legs, chicken legs.....I'll just pretend I am nibbling onto a chicken leg! I'll nibble! I'll nibble! I'll nibble, nibble, and nibble!

I finally finished nibbling. When I let go, I discovered that from his neck to his ears Li Cheng Yin was flushing red, his eyes were bloodshot, and he was breathing heavily.

"You have a fever again?"

He suddenly denied it, saying, "No! You can leave now."

I fixed my clothes and hair, grabbed my knife, and quickly left.

There was no one outside as I continued to walk to my palace residence. I noticed as I was walking, the palace maids had a stunned look and even almost forgot to bow to me. Those palace maids were selected by Yong Niang. All of them were like Yong Niang as well; they always remembered the rules.

After looking at the mirror, I finally understood why they were looking at me like that.

I looked like a ghost. My hair was down, my clothes were a complete mess, and my mouth was swollen. Li Cheng Yin, that rotten egg made my mouth swollen. The palace maids helped me change my clothes and fix my hair. Fortunately, no one asked me about today's matter. If they knew, then there would be no need for me to stay in Eastern Palace. Suddenly, someone outside the door said Li Cheng Yin had sent someone to send me something.

This rarely happened because everyone knew that Li Cheng Yin didn't like me. He never sent anyone to bring things to me.

I felt like something was wrong. Usually when I argued with Li Cheng Yin he wouldn't care about me for the next several days. Today we were fighting very aggressively, but he sent someone to gift me something. This was strange.

However, I'm not scared of Li Cheng Yin, so I said, "Tell him to come in."

He sent Xiao Huang Men to bring a tray with a lid that had a red silk covering it, I couldn't see what was underneath. Xiao Huang Men was sent by Li Cheng Yin, so he was standing in a very well mannered way and earnestly announced the imperial decree. "Your Majesty said he was very apologetic for breaking the Crown Princess's belt, so he want to compensate for your loss by giving the

Crown Princess a string with a pair of mandarin ducks [1]. Your Majesty said, he was going to come and give this to the Crown Princess himself, but he felt very tired, sweated a lot, and was scared to catch a cold, so he couldn't come. Your Majesty also said he wouldn't tell anyone about today's matter, so please relax Crown Princess."

I almost fainted from my anger. Some of the palace maids looked at the sky, some of them looked at the carpet, others were biting the corner of their mouths, some other maids had displeased looks on their faces, and a few maids' faces were distorted from holding in their laughter... Everyone pretended as if they didn't hear anything and refused to look at me.

Li Cheng Yin, you are bold! Is this what you called not telling anyone? This is called using your imperial order to tell the whole world! You are purposely using this way to tell me not to worry.... I can't stand this! Telling someone in this type of situation to not take revenge would be hard!

I gave a strained smile. "I thank your Majesty."

Xiao Huang Men showed his reverence and respect by kneeling down and holding the tray above his head. I reached out to open the lid covered with the silk, and there was indeed a pair of delicate mandarin ducks, as if they were full of joy. Looking at it made me feel very angry to the point I almost fainted from my anger. The palace maids by my side had already moved forward to take the tray.

I already knew Li Cheng Yin wouldn't let me have any good days, but I never thought he'd be this bold. He unexpectedly used this type of scheme. At night, A'Du finally came back with Yong Niang. Not long after Yong Niang arrived, someone told her about the mandarin ducks. Though she didn't ask me about it, she was smiling with joy and when she saw that the corner of my mouth was swollen, she ordered someone to prepare my meal. I dare say the whole Eastern Palace knew about this incident by now. My clothes were a mess and my hair was down when I came out of Li Cheng Yin's palace residence, I didn't know

where my belt went, and then Li Cheng Yin gave me a pair of mandarin ducks as a gift.

Mandarin duck-even thinking about it gave me goosebumps. If Li Cheng Yin sent me a necklace, I wouldn't think it was strange, but he sent me a string of mandarin ducks, which is obvious he was plotting something.

However, the people in Eastern Palace didn't think like that, especially the palace maids who served me. Everyone's eyebrows were raised and they exhaled, believing that I had finally convinced Li Cheng Yin.

"The Crown Prince finally changed his mind, Amitabha [2]! Zhao Liang Di must have mistreated the Crown Prince. Look, she's been rejected by him. The Crown Prince treats the Crown Princess well now."

Notes:

[1] 鸳鸯 Mandarin duck-In this chapter, the mandarin duck we are referring to is a decoration in the shape of a mandarin duck. Mandarin duck is a type of duck, but sometimes in Chinese context it means a couple.

[2] 阿弥陀佛 Amitabha-A chant to the Buddha meaning "May the lord Buddha preserve us."